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ADVENTURES

OF

A GUARDSMAN.

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BY

CHARLES COZENS.

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TO

WILLIAM JONES, ESQ.,

LATE OF HEATHFIELD, IN THE COUNTY OF PEMBROKE,

GENT.

SIR,

IMPRESSED with a deep and lasting sense of the many obligations I am under to you for your generous and truly disinterested efforts to promote my views when a private in the "Blues," evinced in your communications to the late General (then Colonel) Hill, commanding that regiment, I beg to be permitted to dedicate this volume. To its publication, I have been urged by the dictates of my own feelings, powerfully backed by the earnest solicitations of my friends, since my return to my native land. In this "vindication," I have given an epitome of my brief though chequered career, not only as a mat-

ter of justice to myself, but as a duty to those friends to whose generous exertions I am so much indebted. Under these impulses, and with a view to remove any injurious impressions which my seeming ingratitude and unprofitable return for your past kindnesses might reasonably engender, I have performed this painful retrospection of my past life. To you, therefore, sir, as a genuine philanthropist and a true friend, I dedicate the following pages as an *honest* though humble tribute of the gratitude of,

Dear sir,

Your ever obliged and obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Nov. 22, 1847.

PREFACE.

In the following pages I have conformed strictly to the *truth*, and to those matters in which I was either a personal actor, or which otherwise came under my own immediate notice.

In avowing my real name, I feel actuated by many powerful reasons, which the novel position in which I am placed necessarily engenders, and which I will at once proceed to explain. Connected as I am with a respectable family, I deem this publication an imperative duty and necessary tribute to them; for, by thus making a public avowal of the unfortunate chain of events, which entailed on me evils of such magnitude, I trust I may be able to obliterate any

stigma that my misfortunes may have entailed on them.

This publication is a duty, also, which I owe to *myself*, in order to remove all unjust and injurious impressions, which may otherwise be entertained by many whose good opinion I esteem.

Should any of my readers feel tempted to animadvert too severely upon my conduct, I would beg of them to make allowances for an unpremeditated fault, and to consider that this work has been written solely to rescue my name from unmerited disgrace. The fiery ordeal has been passed by me, and I trust that I may not be thought wholly unworthy of the sympathy of the public.

CHAS. COZENS.

SANDY HAVEN HOUSE,
26*th March*, 1847.

ADVENTURES

OF

A GUARDSMAN.

CHAPTER I.

"I will a round unvarnish'd tale unfold

. . . . . .

Nothing extenuate nor set down aught in malice."

Othello.

As it has ever been an accepted rule with all biographers, and a rule from which they cannot consistently deviate, first to introduce to the notice of the reader the birth, parentage, and pretensions of the aspirant to public honours, I deem it essential that I should pursue the same course, and enlighten my readers on so momentous a point.

Of my ancestors I shall say nothing further than that they were respectable, and

what is generally termed in comfortable, nay, independent circumstances. Of myself, I am the sixth and youngest son of my father, who is a freeholder and one of her Majesty's justices of the peace in the county of Pembroke. Of my five brothers, one, the eldest, is an attorney; another, a clergyman; two others entered as midshipmen in the Royal Navy, and the other followed agricultural pursuits.

Being myself intended for the Church, my earliest recollection refers to a period when I was placed as a pupil with a very worthy and much respected minister of the Church, the Rev. J. T——s, who kept a public preparatory school in my native town of Haverfordwest, in the county of Pembroke, South Wales, vulgarly denominated a free school. Whether or not it was a free school, I cannot say; but I am inclined to think, from *striking* proofs I received at the hands of my respected parents for various little acts of truantism, that they had really a greater interest in my attendance than my own personal and particular advancement would sufficiently warrant. Be this as it may, I certainly made it free enough in my own liberal accepted sense, by

not suffering one single opportunity to pass which held out the smallest prospect of a release, however temporary, from the restraint imposed and the controul exercised by my worthy master. Frequent chastisement to myself, and repeated complaints to my father, were the inevitable consequences of my misconduct, until at length I was pronounced utterly incorrigible, and all hopes of my reformation were entirely abandoned.

Not to tire my readers with a repetition of what is of every-day occurrence, I shall at once pass on to a more advanced and interesting stage of my career, upon which depended my future prospects in the world, and which completely regulated my future destiny. But, before I dismiss the present subject, I will relate one instance which occurred connected with my respected pastor, which, from its novelty and originality, may possibly amuse.

I had absented myself from all attendance at school for nearly six weeks, during which time I had most agreeably diversified my amusements with shooting, hunting, &c. Being a day pupil, in private lodgings, I was, one fine Sunday afternoon, at the end

of this period, comfortably seated at my dinner-table, with a smoking and savoury dish before me of which I was particularly fond, viz. a "roast goose." In joyful anticipation of the coming feast, I had opened preliminaries by dexterously inserting a two-pronged fork into the enemy's *breastwork*, when, horror of horrors! there came a thundering knock at the street door, and my name was soon after distinctly, and, as I thought, harshly uttered. A step sounded on the stairs, and, to my great dismay, Miss R——s, my worthy landlady, ushered in unannounced the august person of my offended teacher. Having at my *pressing* solicitation taken a chair, he proceeded to animadvert in the strongest terms on my past misconduct, and indignantly to tax me with what he was pleased to term my unfilial and dishonest behaviour.

My arm and fork were all this time *in statu quo*," and conscious of the great and irreparable injury which would inevitably result to my favourite bird, and considering that, however palatable it might be with apple, it would not be rendered more so with such bitter sauce, I politely requested, if it made no difference to him, as mine was a

"rara avis" to me, that he would be kind enough to defer his lecture until I had partaken of my dinner, or perhaps that he would so far honour me as to join my mess. Innocent as was my intent, it acted like the stroke of a galvanic battery on him; for, starting up, and casting on me a look of unutterable indignation and contempt, he exclaimed, "No, sir! I came not here with a view of *dining* on a goose, but to *reason* with a goose," and instantly rushed from the room. I need not say that I deemed his departure a happy release, and, *swallowing* the affront, soon made up for lost time.

From this promising course of studies I was, at the age of fifteen, removed to Cambridge, in Glamorganshire, the academy of the Rev. Dr. W——s, in order that I might experience the advantages of the most rigid restraint, (being under his own immediate eye,) and likewise be removed from all intercourse with my former associates. Another great benefit derivable from this measure was the fact that this school possessed a privilege not enjoyed by any other grammar-school in the United Kingdom, viz. that

of inducting its pupils into the mysteries of the holy profession without the necessity of entering as a graduate at either of the great Universities, the ceremony of ordination being performed by the Bishop of Llandaff in the cathedral church of that diocese,—no small consideration to parents of younger sons.

Flattering as the course of my studies had been at the former school, my progress here fully eclipsed it; and I will venture to assert, that, in a very short time, my new master was equally as tired, and fully as convinced, as my former one had been, of the inutility of all his well-meant and praiseworthy efforts; and that, however ambitious my friends might be of seeing me a stay to the Protestant Church, my own stay at that academy would be but brief.

The fact of the matter was, that scholastic discipline was not consonant to my wishes, and I was firmly of opinion that military discipline would be far more congenial to my feelings, being chiefly directed against the body corporate and not the mind politic. I therefore gave a decided preference to a red (or, rather, as it turned out, blue) coat

before a black one, and anxiously longed for the period to arrive when I should be released from the trammels of scholastic restraint. An opportunity was not long in presenting itself.

It is only just, however, to state that no efforts on the part of Dr. W——s, which sterling abilities, sound judgment, aided by long practical experience, could suggest, were left unattempted, to wean me from my idle propensities and inattentive habits, but all to no purpose. The seed was sown in a naturally strong soil, which must eventually vegetate and bring forth fruit, however bitter it might be to the taste. No panegyric of mine can enhance the well-established merits of that learned divine, who, I deeply regret to hear, is now no more; but I sincerely trust that he is enjoying the ripe fruits of his arduous and prolonged labours. *Quiescat in pace!*

I remained at Cambridge three years, during which period nothing of importance occurred differing from the customary routine of academical studies, where the sublime and the ridiculous are often so ludicrously blended. I will, however, mention one cir-

cumstance which happened during my stay there, as illustrative of the nature of my studies, and the rewards I sometimes had the good fortune to obtain.

There resided in the town a certain Jew named M——ks, who carried on a rather extensive business in jewellery, and who made it a point of soliciting the patronage of every *green* young gentleman on his first appearance on the *Cambridge boards*, and I need not add that he was very seldom disappointed, for he generally obtained as many "orders" as he thought safe to execute; which, despite his characteristic shrewdness and precaution, often militated sadly against the interests of his exchequer. I was, of course, duly honoured with a visit from this gentleman immediately on my arrival; and not wishing to hurt his feelings, or appear singular by a refusal, being informed that it was a customary thing, I *humanely* granted him my patronage by giving him a small order to the tune of ten pounds stg., *payable* at *my pleasure*, for and in consideration of which, I was to receive divers useful and fashionable articles, comprising watches, guards, snuff-boxes, rings, seals,

keys, scents, combs, brushes, and tooth-picks, with a variety of other articles, too numerous to mention. All this was so far very pleasant to both parties, but to me in particular, until my return at the end of the next vacation, when, indeed, "a change came o'er the spirit of my dream," and immediate payment was peremptorily demanded. This I was not prepared for, having deemed my especial patronage worthy; at least, of credit till my novitiate had expired. But all my protestations were of no avail. I was doomed to perpetual dunnery. In vain I promised to meet his demands the ensuing half-year. Nothing but "*Pone dustum*" would suffice; until at length, driven to a pitch of desperation by his incessant importunities and untiring abuse, I vowed, if he did not desist, I should be tempted to pay him in a coin which he might not like to pocket.

This only added fuel to the flames; and the same evening he again called on me, and commenced his string of complimentary epithets, embracing the whole of my genealogical descent for three generations. Acting upon the impulse of excited feelings, I knocked him down, and subsequently tak-

ing him by the beard, led him away, giving him at parting an additional impetus with my foot. For this grievous offence against her Majesty's liege subject, I was duly summoned before two of her Majesty's justices of the peace, when the offence being proved, I was dismissed, in consequence of palliating circumstances, with the mitigated penalty of one pound, payable to the Queen on demand. So ended my persecution. But the matter did not end so with him; for some months after, the following notice was publicly proclaimed by the town crier and his bell in all the streets and highways, but more especially in front of our schoolroom:—

"Whereas some evil-disposed person or persons did, between the hours of ten and twelve last night, wilfully and maliciously break and destroy sundry panes of glass in the dwelling of Mr. M——ks, jeweller, being and situate in High-Street in this town: this is to give notice, that a reward of five pounds will be paid to any individual who shall give such information as will lead to the apprehension and conviction of the offender or offenders. God save the Queen!"

Here was an enviable position for an in-

nocent young man to be placed in. Suspected by all of being the midnight marauder, I had nothing to do but endure patiently and passively all their unjust suspicions and ungenerous insinuations. I, however, never heard of any individual claiming the five pounds.

My residence at this academy was now drawing to a close. Having incurred the displeasure of my preceptor, through too great an attachment to my gun, I was called upon by him to account for my unauthorised absence, which being utterly unable to do satisfactorily to him, however much it might have been so to me, I was "tasked" to the utmost of my abilities, and far beyond my inclination to perform, with a proviso, that, if not forthcoming at the given time, expulsion would inevitably await me.

Well aware of the resolute spirit I had to contend with, I foolishly resolved to anticipate such a measure, by giving up all further notions of ecclesiastical honours and Church preferment, and to brave at once the perils of a pitiless world. Accordingly I wrote to my friends to apprise them of the step I had taken, and of my determination

to seek preferment in a wider field than that they had allotted for me. Having dispatched my letter, and disposed of my books to procure the necessary funds, with a small bundle containing a change of linen in my hand, I bid a final adieu to that seat of learning, late one winter's night, when the family had retired to rest, and wended my solitary course towards the small seaport-town of Newport, distant twenty-four miles.

As from this apparently insignificant occurrence I reckon all my subsequent misfortunes, forming as it does an epoch in my eventful career, I cannot forbear remarking on that powerful and invisible agency by which we are impelled, imperceptibly as it were, and in defiance of our better reason and judgment, to court the very ills which we ought to avoid.

Conscious at the time of the gross folly and impropriety of the step I was adopting, and the pernicious consequences to which it must necessarily tend, yet, nevertheless, impelled by a power I could not withstand, I heedlessly and recklessly rushed on those very measures which eventually entailed on me miseries of the deepest magni-

tude. To this one simple action of juvenile folly and indiscretion, must I attribute all my future sufferings. By this one step alone I was preparing for myself a series of misfortunes, which involved not only my personal liberty, but, in fact, my very existence itself. Sacrificing the most flattering prospects of honourable and easy independence, I courted one which exposed me to the most abject state of dependence, preferring the idle phantasies of a giddy, inexperienced brain, to the sounder precepts of mature and deliberate manhood.

As it is not, however, my intention to moralise, I shall leave the further discussion of the question to wiser and more experienced heads, contenting myself with relating what I *know* to be *fact.*

The night on which I left Cambridge for Newport was, as I before stated, dark and dreary, and I had not proceeded far, when I was overtaken by a cold and piercing sleet, accompanied with hail, which continued, with trifling intermission, until I reached Cardiff, about midway. This by no means tended to cheer my spirits or enliven the journey; and to mend the matter, my bundle and

clothes were completely saturated. In passing through Cardiff all was hushed in profound stillness—not a soul was to be seen, and not a single house of entertainment open to afford me that refreshment of which I stood so much in need. Although ignorant of the road, I pushed forward, and completed the latter part of my journey towards daylight the ensuing morning, weary, wet, and hungry. Having recruited myself with the necessary rest and refreshment at Newport, I embarked on board a steamer for Bristol, and after a short and pleasant passage arrived there early the same evening. Being a perfect stranger to that city, my first step was, to ascertain from one of my fellow-passengers the most desirable inn for cheapness and accommodation, and was accordingly recommended to the "Saracen's Head," Templegate, at that time kept by a person named H——h, since, I am sorry to hear, killed by a fall from his gig. Thither I accordingly bent my course, and must acknowledge, from subsequent experience, I had no cause to regret the recommendation given to me.

My first step on the ensuing day was to

write a letter to my parents, explanatory of my intentions, and requesting them, if they intended to favour me with a line prior to my departure, to do so by return of post, as the state of my finances precluded the possibility of my staying longer at Bristol. What *really* were my intentions, it would be difficult to say; but my first resolve was, to proceed to Falmouth, and from thence embark for Portugal, the civil contentions at that time raging with great violence between the rival factions of Dons "Pedro" and "Miguel," and a great number of volunteers proceeding from this country to join the standard of the youthful sovereign, Donna Maria, daughter of Pedro, and the lawful heir.

After dispatching this important document, I passed the intermediate time, as much as the strictest economy would admit, in admiring the beauties of Bristol and its environs. During this time nothing of importance occurred, except the following little adventure.

One evening, about the hour of seven, I was walking leisurely along Temple-Street, towards Bridge-Street, with the intention of

whiling away an hour or two in the more busy haunts of that great commercial city, when, in passing an extensive archway where I observed many men, from their appearance, of idle and dissolute habits, assembled, a stone passed me with great velocity, speedily followed by another, which struck me on the leg. Well aware that this could not be the result of accident, I immediately returned, and accosting the first man I came to, politely asked him "Who threw those stones after me?" He replied in a tone bordering on insult and derision, "Why? What if it was I?" I told him, if he answered me in that manner, I should feel no hesitation in treating him as if he had really done so. "Oh, hoh, my covey! that's your game, is it? How many on yer?" and immediately commenced squaring at me.

Knowing from the old Latin axiom, "*Bis dat qui cito dat*"—that the first blow is half the battle, I acted upon the impulse, and, measuring my distance pretty accurately, knocked him down. So instantaneous had been the movement, that his comrades had no time to interfere, but seeing him fall, stood irresolute how to act. My fallen foe having,

however, soon recovered his feet, I perceived him in the act of stooping, evidently with the intention of picking up something from the ground; and before I had time to close with him, and prevent it, I saw him take a deliberate aim at me, and then discharge a large stone with great violence at my head. The missile came with fearful velocity. I had just time to turn my head round, when it struck me on the back part, just above the rim of the hat, making a deep incision in my head, and cutting a triangular piece out of my beaver. Of course I fell, being momentarily stunned by the blow; but almost immediately recovering, I heard some one call out "*Lammas*,* Jack; the *blade*† is getting up again, and might "*pinch*‡ ye," and perceived a figure running down an alley communicating with the archway. Concluding it to be my assailant, I instantly gave chase, and actuated by great excitement and irritation, was rapidly gaining on him, when throwing himself against the door of a suspicious-looking building, without one solitary ray of light, it yielded to his force, and securing it on

* Cut away—run off. † Blade, or lad.
‡ Give in charge.

the inside before I could arrive, he unfortunately escaped me. Finding all my efforts to force the door utterly unavailing, and from the obscurity and gloom of the place my position becoming every moment more perilous, I retraced my steps, and on my arrival in the street found that the companions of the villain had hastily decamped. Feeling myself dizzy from loss of blood and the violence of the blow, I returned immediately to my lodgings, and having applied the necessary remedies, retired to bed, from which I arose, on the following morning, after a sound sleep, perfectly restored, with the exception of a soreness and stiffness resulting from my wound.

At the expiration of a week from the date of my letter, and when I fully anticipated a reply, I was one evening comfortably seated in the bar parlour of my inn, commonly called the "Snuggery," not "in silent meditation fancy free," but inhaling with mine host the fragrant odour of a genuine havanna, and quietly discussing the merits of a pint of port. During this delightful occupation the fate of nations was as rapidly and remorselessly disposed of as if of no more importance than

the generous fluid we were so satisfactorily imbibing.

Our occupation, like all other sublunary joys, was of very short duration, as the following dialogue, set to one key sharp and the other natural, will sufficiently denote, being carried on within earshot of our snuggery. *Invisible:* "I beg your pardon, ma'am, but have you a young gentleman named Cozens staying here?" *Key-sharp:* "Yes, sir."—"Is he within?"—"Yes, sir."—"Where is he?"—"In the bar parlour, sir."—"Could I see him, if you please, ma'am?"—"Yes, sir;" and, suiting the action to the word, the landlady announced, in her own proper person, the presence of a gentleman who wished to see me, which, from my immediate proximity, I could have informed her I was already aware of. However, following her to the bar, I there recognised (and for which, from his voice, I was prepared) my elder brother.

Most affectionately accosting him, I tendered him my hand, which he very politely but resolutely refused, at the same time remarking that he wished to have the honour of speaking with me privately. I silently but

indignantly assented, and followed him to a private apartment, where we were closeted a considerable time; but what the nature of our colloquy was it is unnecessary to relate. Suffice it to say that we shook hands, the bell was pulled, the landlord summoned, and my bill, with two glasses of hot brandy-and-water, immediately ordered. The former was paid, the latter drank; and the following morning saw me on board a steamer bound for Milford Haven, to revisit once more the scenes of my earlier youth.

CHAPTER II.

My reception at home was far more satisfactory and kind than my most sanguine hopes could have anticipated. All my former misdeeds were forgiven and forgotten. This season of sunshine and tranquillity was, however, short and transitory, for the period of my return to the scene of my desertion (now rendered doubly disagreeable to me) again approached. I had, however, firmly resolved to brave every difficulty and danger, rather than again face the anger of my justly offended master, not to say a word about my worthy friend the jeweller.

As too early a development of my future plans would only have tended to frustrate my intentions, and to entail on me certain punishment, I dissembled so as to lull all suspicion in the minds of my kind and indulgent parents, and to flatter them with the hopes of my entire reformation. Extensive prepara-

tions were again made to rig me out for my approaching departure. Shirts were made, handkerchiefs hemmed, stockings marked, and clothes fitted; and little did they dream that these were designed to enrich the stores of a more distant relative, commonly known by the familiar and endearing title of "my uncle," but, in more polite phraseology, as "my father's brother," a gentleman of most extensive family and connexions.

The auspicious day at length arrived—a day big with the fate of no less a personage than your humble servant—when I was again to face, under the safe-conduct of a "flag of truce," (in the shape of a deprecatory letter from my father, enclosing the fee simple of my half-year's tuition,) my insulted and indignant preceptor. On again leaving my father's house, I took with me many admonitory and consolatory speeches, and much salutary advice touching my future conduct in life; and, riding into the neigbouring town of Milford, was soon once more on the high-road to Cambridge, if not to preferment.

It had been the intention of my friends (for the purpose of ensuring my safe return to school) to book me per mail to the place of

my destination; but their well-intentioned purposes were prematurely nipped in the bud by their undutiful son, who having firmly resolved *never* to return there, deemed such an expenditure not only unnecessary but uncalled for, and the money much better in his own pocket. I therefore booked myself to Swansea, being about midway, where I preferred taking the benefit of the sea air to Bristol. I accordingly alighted from the coach on its arrival at Swansea, and, with truly praiseworthy integrity, took the precaution of posting the letter containing the inclosure to Dr. W——s, and then lost no time in seeking the packet. At six o'clock the same evening I was again comfortably domiciled in my old quarters, the Saracen's Head.

Without dwelling on the surprise and astonishment occasioned to its inmates by my unexpected return, or on the commonplace occurrences accompanying my journey to London, I shall at once pass on to my arrival at the White Horse Cellar, Piccadilly, about five o'clock one evening, a total stranger to the vast Metropolis and its countless inhabitants. After defraying all necessary charges,

and seeing my luggage transferred from the care of the boot to the custody of the boots, my first step was to examine carefully into the state of my exchequer, when I found my reals to consist, both in reversion and expectancy, of one shilling and sixpence in *specie*, with a miscellaneous mass of personals too numerous to particularise. As I did not possess the properties of the chameleon, and was forcibly reminded by various intelligible and palpable symptoms in the region of my gastronomic organs, that my long ride on the outside of a slow coach had by no means tended to promote repletion, I began anxiously to consider what, under my present very flattering circumstances, was best to be done, and how I could possibly invest my small capital to the most advantage.

Solemnly and seriously cogitating on these important points, I had sauntered along ignorant of my route, and unconscious of distance, until I arrived at Knightsbridge, when my attention was first attracted by meeting several tall, fine-looking men, dressed in blue uniform. Upon inquiring to what regiment they belonged, I was informed that they were of the Royal Horse-Guards (Blue), then station-

ed at Knightsbridge barracks. Now, Dame Nature, in her formation of my "outward man," (however niggard she might have been in other respects,) having in nowise stinted me in my longitudinal dimensions, but, on the contrary, having been unusually prodigal, I began to consider whether I might not aspire to figure in the ranks of so distinguished a corps.

Journeying with this intent, like a modern Douglas, (but not heaven directed,) I passed the barrack-gate, where some five or six, in a variety of costumes, were listlessly assembled. Summoning my resolution, I accosted one of them, and requested to speak a few words with him in private. Being well dressed, and in tolerably good condition, the hero I *ad*dressed immediately granted my request. Accordingly, taking him to an opposite tavern, and, on the strength of my martial purposes, ordering in two glasses of "blue ruin,"* I broached the subject in the following clever and concise manner:—

"Come, drink, sir: you belong, I presume, to the Royal Horse-Guards?"—"Yes, sir.

* Gin.

I have the honour of drinking your very good health, sir."—"Thank you. Is your regiment complete now as to its number of men?"—"Oh no, sir; we never neglect an opportunity of augmenting our force."—"What height do you take them generally?"—"None under six feet, and as much over as possible."—"Any particular weight?"—"Oh no, sir; no stated weight."—"Should I be fit for your regiment, think you?"—"You, sir! oh you are only joking with me. You have better fish to fry than that, sir. But as to fitness, I am sure you would be a very great acquisition."—"Thank you. Who usually enlist recruits?"—"Any one, sir, belonging to the regiment. I have enlisted a great many myself."—"Will you enlist me?"—"Do you really mean it, sir? or are you merely *rigging* me?"—"I never was more disposed to be serious in my life. Try me, and then you will be satisfied."

No sooner said than done. The shilling was instantly produced, commonly, and most appropriately termed "the *smart* money," the usual ceremony of inauguration performed, and I became *bonâ fide* food for gunpowder, and a liege servant of our sovereign lord

the King (William IV.) and all his heirs and successors.

This matter having been so far satisfactorily arranged to both parties, the smart shilling was duly melted, accompanied by one or two more of the same family, generously contributed by (in military parlance) my "foster-father," on the strength of the new-birth of an "attached" son. After having settled the time and place of our next meeting, for the purpose of presenting in due form the new purchase to the commanding-officer, and one or two other mustachioed authorities of his Majesty's *blue guard*, we separated for the night, mutually pleased with each other.

As my present situation afforded me every facility for the furtherance of my military projects, I determined on remaining *in statu quo*, until the terms of my agreement had been finally completed. Having therefore dispatched a porter for my luggage, I retired to rest to dream of jack-boots and Jews, Wellington and Waterloo; and long ere morning dawned, I had earned imperishable honours on many a bloody field, far eclipsing the valiant Shaw in personal intrepidity and hand-to-hand encounter.

I was yet dreaming of such heroic and warlike deeds, when the shrill blast of a bugle recalled my wandering fancies, and starting up in my bed, I could not for a moment disengage my thoughts from the gory plains whereon they had been so luxuriantly revelling, and felt almost tempted to shout like Richard, on the memorable field of Bosworth, "A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!" But gradually my mind regained its proper direction, and the housings around seemed any but those of bivouac or battle-field. Then it was that the occurrences of the past night, the position in which I had placed myself, and the irretrievable step I had taken, appeared to me in all their gloomy realities. Instead of honours nobly won and proudly worn, days, nay, months of drudgery and drill presented themselves in their place, and I became fully aware that on my own individual exertions depended my future misery or well-being.

The bugle which had aroused me was the morning call of the Blues to stables, technically termed "the *reveille;*" and jumping out of bed, I prepared for the coming important interview with my future commander.

Pursuant to his appointment, my newly acquired parent appeared. He was a young man of very gentlemanly manners named K——y, belonging to the band. Having breakfasted, together, we adjourned to the barracks, where, in due time, I was formally introduced, as a youthful aspirant to martial glory, to the commanding officer, Colonel C—— H——ll, now a general officer. He received me very graciously and cordially, and, remarking my personal appearance, (which, despite my assumed humility, was far from denoting poverty, or any of those concomitants which generally proclaim a desertion from the plough-tail,) observed that, however proud he might feel to number me among his regiment, he was apprehensive that the step I had taken was hasty, thoughtless, and inconsiderate, and resulted from some family dispute.

Duly acknowledging the extreme consideration and kindness with which he honoured me, I politely informed him that I had weighed the matter coolly and deliberately in my own mind, and that my resolution was finally formed to become a soldier of *some sort;* and that, however much I might desire

the honour of ranking as one in his distinguished regiment, (of which I had heard so much,) yet, if he did not think fit to enlist me, I should be under the necessity of offering myself to the Life-Guards, who might not perhaps be so scrupulous.

Upon this, the worthy and gallant chief immediately observed, that, if I were really resolved to become a soldier, he did not see any reason why he should not have me, and inquiring my height—six feet three and three-quarters—ordered me to be taken to the regimental doctor, where I was put through the usual manual, pedal, and corporal exercise, "*in puris naturalibus*," embracing a variety of elegant and amusing positions, truly novel and picturesque. When the performance was concluded, I was pronounced by the learned son of Galen to be sound, wind, limb, and liver.

The foregoing test having been so satisfactorily applied, I was carefully put by for attestation, which ceremony was duly performed at Marylebone Police-office, before Mr. Justice R—s—n, on the 27th day of August, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-three. So ended my installation, and

I had virtually become one of the many stays of the Church, King, and constitution.

The first months of my novitiate passed in the usual routine of facing, fronting, marching, halting, wheeling, forming, quick, slow, and double-quick, with a variety of other little innocent and diverting recreations, pleasing in the performance, but too tedious in the detail. To this succeeded a truly delightful course of "equestrian studies," usually denominated "roughing," and well worthy of its name, God knows! agreeably diversified with the manual and platoon broad-sword and lance exercises; forming altogether a most charming and engaging variety, which left no time for the indulgence of grosser and more vulgar pursuits.

Having become, in the course of nine months, perfectly *au fait* in these necessary accomplishments, I was, through the kind notice and consideration of my commanding officer, who was pleased to honour my efforts with his particular approbation, promoted to the rank of a non-commissioned officer, which, in such a regiment, is justly considered a most distinguished step. By this advancement I found my position and

circumstances considerably ameliorated, having no horse to groom, and being exempt from the disagreeable duties of "fatigues" and "sentry goes." I reaped, moreover, another advantage, which, though last, was not the least considerable, viz. the more frequent opportunities it afforded me of being employed on special duties in and about the royal residences, both at Windsor and London, thereby enjoying the gratification of witnessing many spectacles, which from their grandeur and novelty to me were interesting.

It was customary with our late lamented Sovereign, (who, during the latter years of his life, was particularly partial to military shows,) when resident at Windsor Castle, to require our attendance weekly in the Castle Square, after divine service had been performed in the riding-school at the barracks. Here he would minutely inspect us, going up the front, and down the rear-rank, followed by the officers of his household, and such foreign potentates, or their representatives, as were then with the court—the band playing during the ceremony, and the troops with swords drawn and carried. After expressing his sentiments of commendation, or other-

wise, to the officer in command, we were wheeled into open column of troops, and marched past him in slow and quick time. With this exhibition the performance concluded, and we were at liberty to be marched back again to our stables and horses. Thus ended the Sunday lessons at Windsor cavalry barracks.

With reference to our mounted duties when there, they consisted chiefly of escorts, reviews, field-days, and marching orders. Escorts were furnished when any of the royal family went to, or returned from London, and on these occasions we had the honour of conducting them safe and sound to and from Staines, a distance of eight or ten miles.

On one of these occasions, when escorting our late King and the present Dowager Queen Adelaide to Staines, I happened to be corporal of the advanced guard, and, on arriving at our destination, had scarcely given the necessary word, "On the reverse flank right form," when the horse of one of my party (a splendid animal) fell dead under him, rolling his rider, jack-boots and gauntlets, carbine, cuirass, and all, in the mire, and bending, with the force of his fall, the large bit double

in his mouth. The poor creature, from over-exertion, and the great weight he had to carry, (nearly twenty stone,) had ruptured a blood-vessel in the region of the heart, at least so said the veterinary surgeon. His Majesty most graciously inquired on his arrival "if the man were hurt?" and being answered in the negative, remarked "I am glad of it: as for the horse, it matters nothing; it could not be helped." So saying, and a detachment of lancers having supplied our place, the carriage proceeded; we, of course, returned to our barracks, leaving our fallen comrade to find his way home as best he could.

With regard to the other duties I have mentioned, they were merely common-place, and imposed with a view to the exercise of men and horses. As the peculiar nature of our duties required our periodical attendance in London, to take the place of one of the regiments of Life-Guards, who replaced us at Windsor, we necessarily passed much of our time in London, having to remain twelve months at either barracks, viz. Regent's Park and Knightsbridge. When at either of these barracks, our principal duties were to furnish escorts, guards of honour, attend levees and

drawing-rooms, and accompany his Majesty to the theatre occasionally, as well as that of furnishing a mounted guard at the "Horse-Guards," in rotation with the Life-Guards then stationed in London. It might not perhaps be generally known to civilians, that what is termed the household-brigade comprises three regiments of cavalry and three of infantry; consisting of the first and second regiments of Life-Guards, and the Royal Horse-Guards (blue), cavalry; the grenadier, Scots fusileer, and Coldstream guards, infantry,—one regiment of each being required to be in constant attendance on the royal family, wherever they remain, for the especial duties I have enumerated.

The *matériel* of these regiments is composed chiefly of respectable farmers' sons, tradesmen, or mechanics, who are required to produce strong and satisfactory testimonials of character, or at least unquestionable references. From some cause unexplained, I was not required to do either; but I must here mention the particular and unsolicited kindness of a gentleman named Jones, of great wealth and respectability in the county of Pembroke, who, hearing of the step I had

taken, and being acquainted both with my father and colonel, immediately wrote to the latter, informing him of such circumstances as he thought might tend to promote my future advancement. For this disinterested act of kindness I beg leave thus publicly to express my sincere and heartfelt acknowledgments.

At the expiration of twelve months from the date of my enlistment, during which period I had neither written to nor heard from my friends, I applied for a two months' furlough, with the intention of taking them by surprise, and thus removing all unpleasant feelings resulting from the step I had taken. Agreeably to my request, I obtained the necessary leave; and, late in the evening of the 1st of November, 1834, I mounted the roof of a stage-coach at Slough, near Windsor, bound for Bristol, where on the following morning I duly arrived, taking up my abode once more at my old quarters, the Saracen's Head.

During my journey I was much amused at the conduct of an individual (one of my fellow-passengers) who was seated on the fore-part of the roof, directly behind me.

This gentleman was, it appeared, incommoded by a small box which formed the line of demarcation between our relative positions, and which occasionally, through the motion of the coach, (by no means an easy one,) came into rather disagreeable proximity to the small of his back. From some frolicsome fancy on his part, he took it into his head to suppose that such visitations were the result of wilful and premeditated acts of mine; and in a stentorian voice, and with abundance of oaths, thus saluted my ears:—"D—n you, sir, whoever you are! if you keep pushing this box into the small of my back, I will knock you off the coach!" As my thoughts were at the time luxuriantly revelling among scenes of bygone days, I did not suppose for one moment that these hostile demonstrations were directed to me. Unfortunately, at this identical moment the coach giving another heavy lurch, and probably the box another push, I was most agreeably enlightened on the subject by receiving a smart rap on the region of my pericranium from some hard and heavy substance. Looking round, I perceived my irascible friend standing up with a stick in his hand, and in the act of repeating the

application. To this proceeding I demurred, and demanded an explanation of his unwarrantable conduct. My calmness only served to call down an overwhelming flood of abuse, and various desperate thrusts directed against my body corporate, the execution of which might have left me a very *dismembered* member of his Majesty's Blues, and duly qualified me to enter as an in-door pensioner the halls of Chelsea.

Having no opportunity, from the motion of the vehicle, of duly expressing my acknowledgments for the distinguished and *striking* proofs of the patronage conferred upon me, I passively awaited the stopping of the coach for the customary change of horses, which occurred soon after, when, alighting from the roof, I invited my kind friend to do the same, which he most ungraciously declined. There being several other passengers on the outside, who had heard and seen the compliments conferred upon me, I felt naturally much excited and annoyed; and, springing to the roof, very quietly seized him by the nose and led him to the ground, where, refusing to make good his words by corresponding action, I gave him a sound drubbing,

which I hoped might operate as a useful hint to him in future not to hold out threats he was unable to maintain. During the remainder of our journey, he was not only particularly civil to all, but officiously attentive to me.

Arriving at Bristol, I took a steamer to Milford; but, in consequence of the severity of the weather, we were compelled to put into Tenby. Here I went on shore and remained a fortnight with my brother, at that time holding a rectory in the immediate neighbourhood, and there enjoyed an agreeable relaxation from the harassing duties of military life. Thence I proceeded home, where I was received with unfeigned joy, not unmixed with surprise at my unexpected appearance.

My two months' leave passed rapidly away in the enjoyment of all those amusements and diversions for which Wales, during the winter months, is proverbially characteristic. My mornings were spent in the sports of the field, and my evenings were devoted to music, dancing, and that delightful harmony and communion of kindred spirits only to be met with in the social intercourse of unrestrained

and genuine affection, inseparably connected with the home of our childhood. I had applied to my commanding officer for an extension of leave, which was most kindly allowed. Those three months of military absence were the happiest I ever passed in my life. As, however, all earthly joys must sooner or later come to a close, my period of happiness and sunshine was rapidly drawing to an end. As the time of my departure drew nigh, I could not avoid dwelling on the many and great changes I must necessarily experience on the resumption of my military duties.

How little did I think that this happy time preluded the fearful fate which speedily awaited me! Mine was the treacherous calm which portends the coming tempest, lulling into fancied security only the more surely to ensnare its deluded victims. Happy, indeed, is man in his ignorance of futurity. Fortunate it is for him that that impenetrable veil which conceals his future destiny can only be removed by the searching hand of Time. Were it not so, how many miserable wretches would be tempted to anticipate their fate! Even now, when I look back on the dreadful occurrences which succeeded my last and

happy visit to the scene of my youth, and upon the many long and weary years which elapsed before I again beheld it, although all my miseries and privations have (through the blessing of an all-wise Providence) been surmounted, I cannot avoid shuddering, and wondering that my reason, under such a combination of misfortunes and miseries, did not for ever desert its throne, or, in fact, that death did not in mercy release me from them.

The eventful day on which I was to bid a long farewell to all I held dear upon earth at length arrived. Whether or not I experienced an intuitive perception of my future fate, I know not; but I certainly never felt such a degree of despondency in my life as I did on my departure to rejoin my regiment. In vain I summoned reason to my aid; in vain I dwelt upon scenes of my next and happier meeting. All would not do. A kind of ominous foreboding of evil pervaded my mind, which all my resolution could not conquer. I hurried over the (at all times) painful and distressing scene of leave-taking. Father, mother, sister, brothers—all, all were blended in one indistinguishable mass to me;

my heart was too full for utterance, and a choking sensation affected my throat, almost amounting to suffocation. I dragged myself away with one sad, silent, but impressive salute, far more eloquent than words, and throwing myself on my horse, was soon borne, at his topmost speed, far away from that home which, for so many miserable years, was to know me no more!

On my arrival at my regiment, I of course reported myself to my commanding officer, who felt much surprise at my not having brought with me a score or two of recruits. Martial ardour was not, however, very high at that time among the hills of Cambria. My visit to my friends did not, as might well be imagined, give me a greater relish for the coarse fare and comparative privations of a soldier's life, and I began to view with a less fervent imagination my somewhat dubious and remote chances of professional advancement; and a circumstance soon after occurred which did not tend to strengthen my wavering ardour.

Being one night in company with two or three comrades, enjoying the twofold luxuries of a pint of porter and a pennyworth of

music, at a tavern opposite the barrack-gate, Knightsbridge, where our regiment was then stationed, and usually denominated a "free-and-easy," from the independent nature of the company generally, a row ensued between some civilians in the room, when physical and numerical advantages were far from equal. My comrades and myself immediately interfered to preserve order, and to prevent, if possible, any cowardly or undue advantage being taken. I was in the act of speaking to one of the malcontents, with a view to pacify him, when I heard my name mentioned, accompanied with a hasty warning of impending danger. Quickly turning round, I perceived a man with a red-hot poker raised in his hand, close to me, in the act of bringing the formidable weapon in violent contact with my head. I had only sufficient time to elevate my left arm to ward the blow from my head, when the poker descended like some fiery meteor, and I received it in my extended hand.

Too much excited by the dastardly attempt to heed the hissing metal, which was eating into the bone, I grasped it firmly, and with a sudden jerk wrenched it from his hand, and

seizing it in my right, levelled him to the ground. The poker had been put into the fire for the purpose of taking the chill off beer, and had it not been for the friendly caution I received from a female in the room, that moment would most probably have saved me the necessity of writing this narrative.

In consequence of the injury I sustained, I was compelled to go into the regimental hospital, where I was confined with great suffering for six weeks, the surgeon informing me that the least degree deeper would have so injured and destroyed the tendons as to render my hand useless and contracted for life.

From Knightsbridge in the following July we effected the annual change to Windsor barracks; and the tedium of town duties was agreeably relieved by the quiet change experienced in the shady glades of the Great Park, where we usually exercised.

During our stay at Windsor barracks great dissatisfaction was occasioned throughout the regiment, by the circumstance of certain articles of our allowance of clothing being withheld from us. The chief of these were the cloth overalls or pantaloons, one pair

of which, according to the rules of the service, was allowed annually. Two years had elapsed, and no trousers had been issued; in consequence of which, many of the non-commissioned officers and men had become very bare in that article, myself among the number, and many complaints had been made to the adjutant, Lieut. M——o, but all to no purpose; the invariable answer being, "Well! buy a pair; you *must* appear respectable on parade." To do the latter part without purchasing was morally impossible, as the overalls then in wear were of three years' standing.

Matters went on so for a considerable period; many men were punished for not being *respectable*, among whom I did not escape. Having, one general parade, appeared in a very shabby pair, although they were my best, I was ordered, as a punishment, to parade in complete marching order, attend riding-school drills before breakfast on the roughest horse in the troop, without stirrups, and in jack-boots, be confined to barracks, and parade with the guard every day, until I had purchased a better pair.

This punishment, though severe, I sub-

mitted to for a few days; when, finding that there was no probability of its being remitted, I brought the matter under the consideration of the officer in command, Lieut.-Col. B——, (Col. Richardson being at the time absent,) requesting to be informed whether or not he considered such punishment just or proper. This officer was pleased to confirm the same, informing me that the punishment could not possibly be remitted; that "I must either purchase the necessary clothing, or submit to the consequences."

I then requested a court-martial to inquire into my conduct, but this was refused, although in direct opposition to the articles of war. Upon this I confined myself a prisoner in the guard-room, determined to provoke an investigation, rather than submit to such unmerited severity; but I was speedily ordered by the Colonel *to be turned out*, with an intimation, that, if I persisted in such a line of conduct, he would bring me to a court-martial for mutinous conduct and disobedience of orders.

Finding all my efforts of no avail, I determined to appeal to our head Colonel, Lord H—l, the then commander-in-chief, and

informed Col. B——e of the same. "When you please, sir, do it; but mind what you are about." Acting upon this resolution, I made a full and particular statement of all the proceedings to that officer, detailing the cause of my complaint, the general disaffection of the regiment, and the undue severity with which I was treated. Independent of these particulars, my letter referred to the numerous articles of equipment required to be furnished by a recruit on his first joining, together with the exorbitant charges exacted thereon.

To one point in particular the notice of the Commander-in-chief was particularly directed, viz. that of the leathern pantaloons, *only worn on State occasions*, and which the *recruit had to pay for*. The injustice of this impost needed no comment, the Royal Horse-Guards being the only cavalry regiment in the brigade required to do so, the Life-Guards having theirs furnished to them by the Government, as well as their jack-boots, cuirasses, and even the horse itself. This document was duly despatched; and after the lapse of a fortnight a general parade of the whole regiment was ordered. When assembled, we were marched into the riding-

school, and being formed into hollow square, officers in front, I was called out, and the officer in command, leaning on a sword nearly as long as himself, produced a mysterious-looking package, embraced with red tape, and casting on me a glance, which, if looks were mortal, would that instant have sealed my doom, proceeded to explain to the men the many deep obligations they were under to their kind advocate, as he was pleased facetiously to term me; in proof whereof, he would read to them a letter he had received from the Commander-in-chief. Then followed a copy of my letter, which, while he read, he interspersed with such trite and sagacious comments as suggested themselves to his intelligent mind. With some very commendatory remarks on my philosophic conduct, he then dismissed the parade. I am, however, happy to add, that the disputed clothing was almost immediately forthcoming.

Some short time after this occurrence, I had occasion to apply for a brief term of absence, and was sent for to the orderly-room, where, after a few desultory remarks touching my absence, I was informed "that, much as I might imagine I had done a clever action

in writing to the Commander-in-chief, he could inform me to the contrary, and that I might depend upon it, *if ever my name came under the notice of the 'Horse-Guards,' they would think of me for it.*" I replied, that what I had done was nothing more than a duty I owed to myself; and as for the Horse-Guards, I entertained no dread whatever on that point, as it was never my intention to trouble them for a *pension.* So ended the matter; but the Colonel's words were too soon and too surely verified.

During our stay at Windsor (it might be some five or six months from the date of the before-mentioned occurrences) the races at Ascot Heath took place, and much anxiety to witness the sports was naturally excited in the minds of the soldiers. In consequence thereof liberty was extended to a great many, and myself among the number, and hence originated that unlucky dispute replete with such serious consequences to me.

After participating in the enjoyments of the day, and partaking of such innocent amusements as our limited means afforded, we returned much pleased, and rather elevated, to our barracks, when a disturbance arose

on some frivolous point between myself and the corporal-major of my troop, (John Stevenson,) during which much mutual recrimination ensued. I was passionate, he was provoking, until at length our wordy warfare arrived at such a pitch, that he threatened to put me under confinement. My feelings, before excited to an almost ungovernable extent by his malicious and aggravating tauntings, now carried me beyond the bounds of reason and discretion, and I passionately exclaimed, "that, if he did so, it would be the last time he would do it, as I would *do* for him." Thus, by these few hasty, unguarded expressions, I sealed my future fate, and plunged myself into an abyss of misery, from which all hopes of retreat were perchance for ever cut off.

I was immediately reported to the captain of my troop, Vincent Corbett, and ordered to be confined; but I for some time resolutely resisted the guard, until, overpowered by numbers, I was dragged to the guard-room, and there locked in what is appropriately termed the "black hole," to muse over my fallen fortunes, and contemplate the flattering prospects that opened to my view. I was detained a close prisoner for some time, un-

certain of my future fate, and denied all intercourse or communication with any one.

What measures were intended to be adopted I knew not, or whether any serious notice would be taken of so trifling a charge. My uncertainty on this point was, however, one day speedily removed, and all my doubts at once set at rest; for, being summoned to attend at the orderly-room, I was there informed by Colonel R——n, the officer in command, that it was the determination of the authorities to bring my case under the notice of a general tribunal, and, by making a public example of me, endeavour to put a stop to the pernicious practice, too prevalent in the army, of threatening and striking superior officers. Much as he regretted the measure on account of my youth, my former good conduct, and my family connexions, he could not avoid it, as advice had been received from the Horse-Guards to that effect, and he was compelled to act upon it. He therefore warned me, in the customary manner, to prepare for a court-martial.

I thanked him for his kind consideration, though deeply deploring the occasion; and I must do Colonel R——n the justice to men-

tion, that I firmly believe his sympathy was sincere, and that, had he been left to his own honourable and unbiassed judgment, the minutes of my case would never have graced the dusty shelves of the War Office. But there existed a strong propelling power, which, overruling his better feelings, insidiously urged him on; and which, like the famed Archimedean screw, shunned observation, that its invisible agency might the more forcibly be acknowledged. Here was, indeed, opened a fine field whereon to wreak their revengeful malice; here was an opportunity afforded, which, like "angels' visits," few and transitory, might not again occur for one military generation. Now was the auspicious moment for the mighty myrmidons of military despotism to assert their power supreme, and evince to the army at large, that their decrees, like the farfamed laws of the Medes and Persians, were not to be disputed or controverted. And well and truly did they confirm their sway; well did they enact their part, and doubly well did they exercise that solemn trust which man on man has so prodigally bestowed; supported as it is by a code of laws, which, how-

ever well they might operate in time of war, are, in the piping times of peace, dreadful to contemplate, presenting, as they do, such fearful facility to the unrestrained exercise of tyrannic sway and absolute authority, embracing, on the most trivial occasions, not only the liberty, but the life itself of God's holy image—man. And yet how quietly and unconcernedly will they not dispose of such, as if the very attributes of inferior grades were of no moment in the scale of *their* magnificence. His *hopes*, his *feelings*, his *ties*, his *all*, *his liberty*, are as remorselessly sacrificed at the shrine of offended dignity as if a dog had come within the pale of their displeasure. But when their boasted superiority, their vaunted authority, shall have yielded to that *call* which none can defer or dispute,—when they shall be arraigned at the bar of that grand Tribunal where all terrestrial distinction shall be levelled, whose decrees cannot be repealed, and whose laws are equal and power infinite,—how great, how comprehensive would *their* punishment be, were it only meted to them in the same proportion as they had measured to others; dreadful indeed would then be their fate!

It is surely deserving of attention, that, much as the civil and criminal codes of law in this country have been either amended or repealed within the last thirty years, the "Articles of War," however stringent and severe, have never once been amended or repealed, suitably in a measure to the time of peace, when it is less requisite to make public examples of offenders. The poor unfriended soldier has no hope of help, when placed under the controul of a military martinet: his liberty, nay, his life, is at all times subservient to the caprice and temper of his superiors, since for the most venial offences, were the law acted upon, the one or other is too surely forfeited. Having myself experienced the baneful influence of this rule, I cannot too deeply deplore it.

During the period of my incarceration at Windsor, the time arrived for our next annual remove; and on the 1st of July 1839 the regiment again marched to London, taking up its quarters at Regent's Park barracks. For the purpose of convenience and celerity, I was sent handcuffed and under a strong escort to the railway station at Slough, and thence in a train to London. The day sub-

sequent to our arrival I was visited by the adjutant, who furnished me with a copy of my indictment, and ordered me to prepare for trial on the following day, being the 3rd, strongly recommending me to plead *guilty* to the charges therein contained. This, however, I resolutely refused doing, informing him that I never could reconcile my mind to a measure so directly opposite to the truth, as, whatever might have been the purport of my *words*, the *guilt* alone rested in the *intent*.

Accordingly, on the day named, I was marched in close custody to the officer's house, in the mess-room of which, being a large apartment, the tribunal was assembled. Being brought before the court, where the full number of epauletted members were already assembled, comprising officers of the 1st and 2nd Life-Guards, and my own regiment, the proceedings commenced with the customary administration of the necessary oaths, and I was asked by the president, Lieutenant-Colonel G—w—d of the 2nd Life-Guards, whether or not I objected to any of the members of the court. Casting my eyes cursorily around, I recognised immediately

on the right of the president Lieutenant-Colonel B. My first impulse urged me to challenge that gentleman immediately, being well aware, from former experience, that his influence would not tend to the furtherance of my interests. On secondary consideration, however, I resolved to forego my purpose, and content myself with placing implicit reliance on the integrity of the court and the insignificance of the charges.

I was then arraigned for having, on or about the month of June last past, threatened the life of corporal-major John Stevenson, of Captain Corbett's troop, he being at the time my superior officer. There were two other minor counts concocted for the same charge, all tending to establish the same point, being a rule generally adopted in such cases, for the twofold purpose of attaching a greater degree of importance to the indictment, and preventing, through any oversight, discrepancy, or technicality, the possibility of a total failure of the prosecution. To these charges I unhesitatingly pleaded *Not guilty.*

The whole of the evidence then adduced tended to prove the utterance of certain *threats* inimical to the safety and well-being of the said corporal-major, together with the fact of my being at the time in a state of inebriety and unusual excitement, and the total absence of all previous malice or ill-feeling; all of which was, in point of fact, literally true. There was, however, one officer* examined for the prosecution, the discrepancy of whose testimony with the foregoing tended to throw a degree of doubt on one point of considerable importance.

* This officer, I have been informed, has since died a miserable death. Very soon after my banishment, he discovered strong symptoms of confirmed lunacy, which gradually increased, until he was compelled to retire from the service, and eventually closed his career in a *private mad-house*. The corporal-major, likewise, who was the legitimate cause of my expatriation, has since become a kind of religious enthusiast, frequenting all kinds of meetings and places of worship, and evincing a certain marked melancholy, which is rendered the more observable from the fact of such conduct being totally opposite to his former character and pursuits. His remorse is not diminished by the constant tauntings and revilings to which he has been almost daily exposed from my former associates

This person, despite the corroborated evidence to the contrary of four non-commissioned officers, previously examined, on being questioned by the court, distinctly and positively swore that I was *perfectly sober* at the time of using the threats.

How that gentleman could reconcile such a statement, made under the most solemn obligations, with the evidence of the former witnesses, I will not attempt to question; far be it from me to urge the existence of any dishonourable or vindictive feeling in the mind of one holding a distinguished position in society, and a commission in her Majesty's household. *But* on one point there can be no question, namely, that *four* or *one* laboured under a gross misapprehension, and which it was, I leave to their own consciences and the opinion of the world to determine. I do not mean to plead intoxication as any extenuation of my conduct, such being deemed in a military point of view an aggravation; yet, surely, where words were used under such peculiar circumstances, a little latitude

and comrades *in arms*. These particulars I have had from the most indisputable authority, no less than one who has been an eye-witness in both cases.

might have been allowed for the ebullitions of an intoxicated brain. Certain it is that a worthy and distinguished officer there present remarked, in the hearing of many, that it appeared to him to be nothing but a drunken quarrel, and that, had such occurred in *his* regiment, he would not have noticed it. But his lenient view of the case was destined to avail me nothing.

The trial having lasted about eight hours, I was remanded to my old quarters, the guard-room, where, in a large well-secured apartment, alone and unfriended, I was left to await the decision of the court, and ruminate on the many and sad changes which man is heir to.

One month had now elapsed from the date of my confinement, during which period my allowance for provision was 6*d.* per diem. This paltry pittance would not, however, purchase many delicacies, and the proceeds invariably consisted of a half-quartern loaf and one pennyworth of cheese, diluted with as much *aqua pura* as I thought proper to imbibe. It may, therefore, very naturally be inferred that I did not suffer from obesity, or run much risk of repletion. My cloak form-

ed my bedding. My captivity, enlivened by *agreeable* communion with my own thoughts, formed as delightful and captivating a picture as any youthful and romantic hero need aspire to.

This state of solitude and inaction became at length so painful and oppressive, that I longed for some change, no matter to what scene or place; and the anxiety and suspense consequent on the incertitude of my fate was more intolerable than the certainty of the severest punishment.

Days, nay weeks rolled on in the same monotonous routine — the same unvaried gloom. Trumpets were sounded—guards relieved—parades performed, but still no change with me—no form but that of my military gaoler to glad my sight. I listened with a painful intentness to every sound of busy active life, bringing, as it did, forcibly to my remembrance the many happy, thoughtless days when I had been an active participator in those scenes. And where was I now? What would be my future fate? My parents, too! did they know of the trial I had undergone, and its probable result? Could they imagine my present painful position? Would

they dream that the giddy, careless school-boy of former days was silently and sorrowfully awaiting the doom of a general court-martial in the confines of a dungeon? No; all—all was unknown to them; unconscious of aught which threatened my well-being, they basked in the sunshine of fancied security, only the more sorely and surely to feel the blow which was being aimed at their defenceless heads. And fall it did, with an energy and violence overwhelming and astounding.

Two long and weary months of sad and solitary imprisonment had now elapsed, rendered more than doubly distressing by the painful anxiety and feverish suspense which invariably accompanies the pending of any momentous event touching our own immediate interests, when the solitude of my dungeon was one morning disturbed by the sudden and unexpected entrance of the corporal of the guard, who, knowing my desire to have the matter terminated, congratulated me on my prospects of almost immediate release, as an express orderly had just arrived with despatches from the Horse-Guards, and a general parade was ordered, at which I was

warned to appear, for the purpose, it was assumed, of hearing the fiat of my fate pronounced. Much as would depend upon this important crisis, I thankfully and joyfully received the communication; and I can safely say that the only gleam of cheerfulness I experienced during my confinement was when preparing for this all eventful meeting. Two o'clock arrived, and then was heard the shrill and piercing blast of eight silver trumpets ringing fearfully on the ear, and forcibly reminding the awe-struck listener whose knell it sounded, of that more awful trump, whose blast shall penetrate the remotest corners of the earth, repeople with disembodied spirits, and summon with its call those vast, terrible, and countless legions to receive that final and eternal sentence which knows no remission or commutation. Under the influence of some such impressive feelings I took my station in the centre of my guard, and beheld the imposing spectacle presented to my view.

Drawn up in line, motionless, and in full costume, was the entire regiment of the Blues, officers with drawn swords, and the men under arms. And all that pomp and

ceremony were performed merely for the purpose of awarding a punishment to a comrade in arms, and impressing on the soldiers' minds the awful consequences of the smallest infraction of military discipline or respect. The regiment was then marched to the riding-school, and formed into a kind of hollow square. I was brought in and called into the centre by my old friend Colonel B—r—e, to whose especial lot appeared to fall all the *agreeable* parts of the performance. He then proceeded to read such parts of the minutes of my court-martial as were deemed necessary for the occasion.

After enumerating the many and grave charges in the indictment of the prisoner, he proceeded to the finding of the court, which was, "The court, having duly considered the evidence for and against the prisoner, together with his defence, are of opinion that he is guilty, and do sentence the prisoner to ten years' transportation beyond her Majesty's seas. But her Majesty has been most graciously pleased, on the strong recommendation of the general commanding in chief, to mitigate the said punishment to seven years, which sentence is or-

dered forthwith to be carried into effect. Approved," &c.

Where were now all my youthful and heroic aspirations? where now those gay visions of glory and renown which gilded my martial *début?* They became like the lowering clouds o'er the house of York, "in the deep bosom of the ocean buried." Placidly folding the fatal manuscript, as if it had been an old edition of the "Morning Post," the *noble* colonel, with a grim and ghastly smile, remarked, "that he much regretted the painful duty imposed upon him, and was sorry that a young man of my seeming respectability should be placed in such a position, but it could not be helped. I was to go abroad, and Sidney was to be my destination." I thanked him for his *kind sympathy*, and observed, "that, go when or whither I would, I should bear with me a clear conscience, which I feared those who were the cause of my banishment could not boast of."—"Guard, remove your prisoner!" was the only reply, and I was once more consigned to gloom and solitude; but with what a total reversion of feelings! Before, all was suspense, anxiety, and apprehension; now, all agony, remorse, and condemnation. The

veil had been removed, and what a blank, desolating, and despairing prospect was thus rudely revealed! My friends, too — what would *their* feelings be when apprised of my destiny? What would be their soul-harrowing reflections when they contemplated the miserable fate to which my juvenile follies had exposed me. After all their care, anxiety, and expense, so bountifully lavished on me, to be so cruelly repaid with chains and slavery! But there was still, in this dark chaotic mass, one ray of consolation, one beacon of hope, which the utmost malice of my persecutors could not withhold from me or prevent, and that was the total absence of all criminality. Culpable I certainly may have been, and that to a very great extent; but my errors were of the head, and not of the heart or hand. This reflection was indeed a heavenly balm to my wounded and surcharged spirit; and, availing myself of the feeble glimmerings of hope therein contained, I wrote to my parents, acquainting them with all the circumstances of my case. Relieved in a great measure by this step, I began seriously and calmly to contemplate the dreadful position in which I had so foolishly placed myself.

The causes I well knew, but the effects remained still to be revealed.

There is, however, no circumstance, be it ever so fearful and desperate, under which man might be placed, (not even excepting the condemned cell of the malefactor,) which admits not of some latent spark of hope, —sweet, but oftimes delusive soother of human woes,—to gladden with its transitory ray the dark and gloomy horizon of our destinies. So it was with me; an intuitive conviction seized my mind that the dark cloud which enshrouded in its folds my future fortunes would again be dispelled, and the bright star of my birth once more revealed; and subsequent events proved my anticipations not wholly unfounded. I must, however, apologise to my reader for so long and tiresome a digression.

On the morning subsequent to my sentence, my cell was suddenly entered by the regimental corporal-major, who informed me that I was immediately to be removed to the Millbank Penitentiary, prior to my transfer to the hulks at Woolwich. Indifferent whither they took me, and glad to escape at any price from my present place of confinement, I

quietly submitted to the ceremony of handcuffing; and being delivered over to the charge of a corporal and a file of men, with loaded carbines, was marched in the full glare of a fine summer's sun through the most crowded thoroughfares of London, the gaze of all beholders, it being an unusual sight to see one of the household troops in such a questionable shape.

We at length arrived at the Penitentiary, a large, regular, and gloomy building, situated on the banks of the Thames immediately adjacent to Vauxhall Bridge. Here I was received by the janitor; and, taking a final leave of my late comrades, was ushered into a large stone-floored room, having in it two capacious baths for the purpose of purification. Having satisfactorily performed my ablutions, I introduced myself to a suit of sable grays, with large iron buttons, and a shirt to match. When fully accoutred I was removed to my cell, an apartment of the most durable materials, and nine feet by six, illumined with one window gracefully ornamented with thick *iron* trellis-work. Being questioned by my conductor, a perfect Cerberus, as to my *march* of *intellect*, he pointed to a card sus-

pended from the wall, and intimated the same to contain the regulations. So saying, and with strict and positive injunctions to adhere scrupulously to the rules therein laid down, he left me "in silent meditation fancy free."

My first impulse was to read the rules, which informed me that the total use of my *tongue* was prohibited, (the teeth might as well have been included also,) and no talking, singing, or whistling was allowable, (by the bye, that fellow must be a merry, light-hearted soul indeed, and richly deserving of a high premium, who could commit a breach of the last two regulations; and, for the first, he must, like Hamlet, soliloquise aloud,) under the most heavy pains and penalties.

My occupation during week-days would be most agreeably diversified with picking oakum, turning an iron water tank for the general accommodation of the prison, and circling round a yard or court, at double open file, in conjunction with some score or two other young gentlemen, aspirants like myself for government distinctions. This formed altogether a happy and amusing pastime, to which an additional grace was given by the extreme novelty attending it.

My cell furniture, on minute inspection, proved to consist of one table, one stool, a hammock, two pewter pint measures, one wooden salt-seller and spoon, a hair-comb, bible and prayer-book, together with an indefinable, and to me, perfectly anomalous mass of matter in one corner, which proved to be, on further acquaintance, old junk, *i. e.* pieces of rope so denominated, for the purpose of being converted into oakum.

This delightful occupation generally commenced about the hour of six in the morning, and continued without intermission until eleven, when it was relieved and diversified by a manual process at the tank for half an hour, concluding with our pedal exercise in the yard for another half hour, when we were countermarched to our respective domiciles, where the same studies presented themselves *post prandium.*

With respect to our diet-roll, our morning and evening repast consisted of one pint of water-gruel, alias "skilly," not *too* strong, but very hot, with a small roll of bread, about the size of half of our ordinary penny loaves. Dinner was served in a similar frugal manner, with the exception of a pint of broth or soup,

in lieu of skilly, and a *very* small portion of animal food, somewhere about four ounces in weight, and of a very doubtful genus. With the termination of our last meal came the hammocks, which were then allowed to be slung. The daily ablution took place the first thing before breakfast, two or three persons being let out at a time to a fountain in the interior of the yard.

When any young gentleman required to leave his cell during the day, a painted pasteboard was conveniently placed, whereby through a slit in the wall of his cell communicating with the passage, he could intimate his desire, one end of the telegraph being painted red, and the counter black, which signal was immediately attended to, and he was carefully let out.

Sundays were exclusively set apart for chapel service and bible reading. The chapel was very commodious, and in the centre of the prison. Prayers were, however, read by the wardsman in the passage every day before morning and evening meals, each inmate standing during the ceremony at his cell gate, the door being thrown open for that purpose. I can, however, venture to assert that the

thoughts and attentions of the prisoners were more devoted to the coming feast, than the blessings which preceded them; and no response was ever more fervently and sincerely uttered than the concluding amen which relieved them from so trying a penance. Silence, solitude, and starvation, were indeed the prevailing characteristics of this living *mausoleum.*

My stay at this delightful suburban retreat was fortunately of short duration, although sufficiently prolonged to impress me with a due horror of its gloomy and corroding character and influence. After the lapse of two weeks, I was summoned early one morning to resume my original clothing; and being taken to the governor's office, was duly handcuffed and delivered over to the charge of a corporal and a file of men belonging to the Grenadier Guards, who, to impress me with a proper and becoming sense of their power and authority, and with a view to remove all sinister thoughts touching escape, &c. from my mind, very gravely and deliberately loaded their pieces and fixed bayonets at the entrance-gate of the prison. So distinguished and attended, I was march-

ed to Woolwich, a distance of ten miles, and entering what, from some unaccountable cause, is called the *liberty* gate of the arsenal, (only used to bar the unfortunates from that inestimable blessing,) was speedily consigned to the tender mercies of the Justitia hulk-officials.

Any one who has seen the interior of a line-of-battle ship, can form a pretty accurate idea of the accommodations of the hulk. But, for the information of such as may not have enjoyed such advantages, I may as well make a few passing remarks.

The hulk is a large-sized dismasted ship, formerly a man-of-war, and drawn up close adjacent to the arsenal, with which a platform communicates from the ship's gangway. It is subdivided into so many different apartments termed "wards," varying in size according to the number and nature of their occupants, and forming three distinct stories or tiers, called the upper, middle, and lower decks, altogether capable of containing from eight to ten hundred men. Hammocks supply the place of berths, which, from the facility of slinging, accommodate a much greater number of men.

The prisoners are mustered every morning during week-days in the yard, formed into distinct gangs, having a free overseer to each, and then marched under military surveillance to their respective occupations; some to clean shot in the arsenal, or to erect mounds and scarps, under the direction of the sappers and miners, for artillery practice, others to load and unload barges in the mud, or to attend the different tradesmen and mechanics employed in the dockyard.

Independent of the foregoing, there are a number of military prisoners, among whom I ranked, especially retained as *laundresses*, or for the purpose of washing the shirts or *linen* of the remainder of the *family*, amounting at the time I speak of to about five hundred. These washermen were never allowed to go outside the yard, lest, from their former pursuits, old associations, and the proximity of the artillery barracks, an "escapade" might be effected— a very sage precaution certainly. The whole were placed under the surveillance of a civil superintendent termed "captain," a gentleman, at the time referred to, named Hatton,—venerable and humane, and who strove by the most lenient exercise of his authority,

extreme courtesy, and benignity, to gain the good-will and respect of those poor unfortunate outcasts who were, from a variety of causes, committed to his charge. And, if the most deferential respect and cheerful deportment of the men were any criterions of their true feelings, his humane and considerate conduct was duly appreciated and acknowledged.

On the day of my introduction, after the customary ablutions and change of apparel had been effected, similar to the Penitentiary in form and figure, I was conducted to the blacksmith's shop (which might truthfully be assimilated to the brother functionaries of Gretna Green celebrity, where the chains forged for the hymenial bonds are too often those of slavery,) and duly invested with the most dishonourable order of knighthood, in the shape of a pair of leg-irons, closely rivetted on one of the legs, and having a long heel or spur, not inappropriately termed *spur irons:* these, when safely secured, were fastened by the connecting chain to the garter, when the *tout ensemble* became perfect, and had a most imposing effect.

Then it was that I first experienced in its

full force the misery and debasement of my position; when every blow of the hammer, jarring through the very marrow to the heart, struck a chill to my blood which it had never felt before. It sounded like the falling earth on the hollow shell of a dear departed—as a death-knell to all my future hopes and happiness. Then it was that I felt the arrow which my persecutors and accusers had so sedulously implanted in my soul, corroding my very vitals, and causing a wound which time or place could never heal. My readers must, however, draw their own inferences as to my feelings on this trying occasion, the retrospect being of too painful a nature for me to dilate upon.

After this impressive ceremony had been performed and I had been furnished with a tin can, hammock, and iron spoon, I was taken on board the hulk and shewn my dormitory, a large and lofty chamber, situated on the middle-deck, lighted by the original port-holes, with the additional security of transverse iron bars, *to prevent accidents and offences.* My sleeping associates I found to consist of some fifteen or twenty, persons of various conditions. Two boys,

in particular, brothers both in kindred and iniquity, attracted my particular attention from their extreme youth, (the eldest being not more than twelve, and the other a year or so younger,) their *seeming* innocence and inexperience: good-looking and well-spoken lads they were, and they astonished me with the precocity and maturity of their manners. Wondering what serious crime could have subjected two such children to so severe a punishment, I was induced to ask the elder what sentence he had received? "Oh, I am a bellowser," meaning thereby that he was transported for life; "but that kid's" (pointing to his brother with a pitying and patronising air) "is only *fourteen-pennorth.*"

This being to me like so much High Dutch, and not wishing to expose my *ignorance* in such matters, I gravely replied, "Ah, indeed, is it possible?" thereby implying that I comprehended in its fullest extent the very lucid explanation he had afforded me. "And what was it for, my fine fellow?"—"Only starring the glaze," he coolly answered. "Starring the glaze!" I exclaimed "and what in heaven's name does that mean?" a vague and confused idea crossing my mind, wherein Herschel,

houses, planets, and putty were indiscriminately mingled.

A roar of laughter at my extreme *rawness* succeeded my interrogation, which having at length expended itself, I was further enlightened in the mysteries of *slang*, by the juvenile glazier or astronomer informing me that starring the glaze meant neither more nor less than cutting out a piece of glass from a window pane, in a shop or dwelling-house, with a diamond, to effect an entrance through the window by removing the fastenings, or to abstract such articles as were within reach; a process at which, I was informed, my juvenile comrades were particularly expert, and had, even at that tender age, acquired great notoriety.

I could not avoid shuddering at the bare contemplation of such fearful depravity, (so premature, yet so perfect in its birth,) and the giant strides with which these youths were hastening to that dreadful crisis which would inevitably tend to an ignominious and premature end, and that, too, without one saving hand to help them; they, however, seemed totally callous to their condition, so prompt and powerful had been the force of

habit and bad example. Their immediate destination was the Isle of Wight Penitentiary, appointed for such youthful offenders, where, I am informed, they are instructed in different branches of trade.

Another youth, on being questioned by me, said he was a *conveyancer;* simply meaning a pick-pocket: a third, that he had been a most extensive *timber-merchant*, which I subsequently ascertained alluded to his having formerly *vended matches.* Such is the influence of vice.

Our daily diet-roll at the hulks consisted of biscuit and *skilly*, morn and eve; and on alternate days beef and broth, or bread, cheese, and small-beer, nicknamed *swipes*, for dinner—the former being (not inaptly) styled *bull-day*, from the animal of which it once formed a component part. Connected with this, a truly ludicrous circumstance occurred during my stay, which will tend to illustrate the kind of feeling predominant there.

One *bull-day*, a military transport was brought to the hulks, who had been sentenced for desertion, and having attempted, on his transit, to drown his sorrows in a bowl, was in that state commonly denominated "crying

drunk." During the process of ironing him, he commenced crying bitterly, apostrophising her Majesty and all the Royal family in a manner not very flattering to their vanity, and deploring his hard fate. A stander-by, who was what is termed an *old fake*, one who is undergoing his second probation, observing the lachrymose *new chum*, and highly disgusted with his want of spirit and fortitude, indignantly remarked, "Why, damn the fellow! if he cries to-day (*bull-day*), what the devil will he do to-morrow, when it is only bread and cheese and swipes?" This *witty* and pertinent remark occasioned a general laugh at the expense of the *novice*, who, though not knowing the purport of the words, was completely shamed out of his weakness.

Another *clever* trick played on the uninitiated is during dinner on *bull-day*, when the mess is apportioned out into so many lots —*fairly* and *equitably* of course. When ready, one of the *knowing* ones turns his back on the table, while another raps each mess with his spoon, at the same time asking "Who shall have *this?*" His comrade answers "*I will.*"—"And who *this?*—*You shall.* "This? —*New chum!*" And so on to the end of

the chapter; but it *invariably* happens that the poor unfortunate *new-comer* gets far more than he can eat, as *all the bones in the mess fall to his lot.* But this *joke* will only live a day or two, as in a very short time it is "*diamond cut diamond.*"

The labour we soldiers were required to perform was very arduous and severe for the first four days of the six, as we had to scrub with a brush, inside and out, about five hundred thick smock-frocks, termed *shirts*, and dry them on lofty lines in the yards; after which they had all to be ironed, and folded *numerically*, which was a very tedious and tiresome operation. But the greatest inconvenience experienced in this branch of the department was occasioned by the filthy state of the shirts *from vermin*, which, on some, *literally swarmed*, and every place in the wash-house, from long usage, was in the same state. This was truly most dreadful and repulsive. Smoking was strictly prohibited, and the use of all liquors.

Divine service was performed in the chapel of the hulk once every Sunday, when all hands were required to be present. Our worthy and respected minister used, however,

to occasion much amusement by the peculiar whimsicality of his remarks, composed as they were of personal allusions and maledictions. Whether from eccentricity, or some other cause, his ideas appeared sometimes wandering and confused; and he used to select from his numerous and talented congregation some remarkable or conspicuous person, to whom he would direct the particular attention of the remainder, desiring them to observe (as the case might be) that hoary-headed old sinner, (himself being about eighty,) who was galloping fast along the road to perdition, with the devil riding and urging him on. "But, in fact, the whole of you," he would remark, "are doomed men, with the brand of Cain on your foreheads, and you will all inevitably be d——d." Such was the general tenor of his discourse, which, it must be admitted, was certainly of a very consolatory nature.

During my stay at the Hulks, a very ingenious attempt was made to effect an escape, and, had it not been through a trifling oversight in the operator, the device would most certainly have been attended with the most signal success. One of the prisoners managed

during his hours of labour on shore to secrete and convey on board a small wicker hamper, which, selecting a favourable moment, he threw overboard. He then contrived, unobserved, to lower himself into the water from the main deck, when, diving under the hamper, which lightly floated in the tide, he came to the surface, having that article over his head, and being completely concealed by it. So far all succeeded; but, unfortunately for him, the tide going down, he endeavoured to stem the current by treading water, so as to be enabled to make the nearest point on the opposite shore. The singular phenomenon of a light wicker basket making headway against the tide without the aid of sails or steam, attracted the attention of one of the sentries on shore, who, after an earnest and prolonged gaze at the remarkable object, was fully satisfied that some invisible agency was at work. He therefore levelled his musket, and fired at the hamper, the ball passing through it, and narrowly shaving the head it enveloped. This unexpected visitation promptly induced the novel navigator, fearful of a repetition of the visit, speedily to divest himself of his cumbrous cap, when lo! "the

blushing hero stood confessed." A boat was instantly manned, and the clever adventurer being picked up, was safely lodged in his old quarters, where a little solitary confinement was deemed necessary for his mental welfare, and an additional pair of irons for his corporal security.

At the expiration of six weeks, and when I had become perfectly *au fait* in the art of shirt-washing, a great excitement prevailed in the minds of the *patriots*, so termed from the following clever impromptu, written in large chalk characters, in a conspicuous part of the hulks,—

"True patriots we, for be it understood,
We leave our country for our country's *good*,"—

from a rumour which was circulated, that the "*bay ship*" was on the point of sailing to that distant, and, to them, unknown world, termed Botany Bay.

Such a prospect of immediate release from the unvarying routine and monotonous drudgery of hulk life, was a source of general and unfeigned satisfaction, although at the sacrifice of their home, country, and kindred to many of them; and the event was hailed as the

happiest occurrence which could possibly take place. One of the numerous and diversified expectants, in particular, evinced the most intense interest and anxiety on the subject, as the crime for which he had forfeited the rights of a free subject, and incurred the sentence of expatriation for the term of his natural life, was of such a nature as to attract the notice and occupy the attention of almost all classes in England. Indeed, while he remained at the hulks, numerous well-dressed persons of both sexes assembled daily in the Arsenal for the express purpose of seeing one whose case has caused such a powerful sensation, both from its enormity and the former character and position of the culprit in society. But they were as often doomed to disappointment, for he was never suffered to go out of the yard.

This man's name was Bolam, and he formerly had held an office of great responsibility at a bank in one of the most flourishing towns in the north of England, which situation he had occupied for a number of years with unblemished character and reputation, to the date of his present misfortune. The charges against him being several, and of the most

serious nature, his fate was some considerable time suspended between life and death, as it were by a thread, and was considered all but hopeless, when, by dint of the greatest influence and interest on the part of his friends, who were most respectable, and after a lapse of six weeks in the condemned cell, sentence of death was commuted to one almost tantamount to it, "transportation for life to a penal settlement."

Poor fellow! under all circumstances his case was truly pitiable, and he hailed with feelings of intense delight the joyful moment which would separate him eternally from those scenes rendered so painful to him by the dreadful associations with which they were connected, and bear him to a land where his crimes would be alike unknown and uncared for. We were necessarily thrown much together, and I never remember seeing a man more dejected and careworn; his mental sufferings, indeed, far exceeded his bodily privations. Guilt, in this case, brought with it its own punishment!

During my stay here, and prior to my departure from my native land, as I thought, perhaps never more to revisit it! I made one

effort to excite the sympathy and obtain the clemency of the commander-in-chief, by means of a petition forwarded through the medium of his brother, my former colonel, then General Hill. In this appeal I forcibly set forth the bitter and agonising situation in which my friends were placed, and the dreadful anxiety they must necessarily experience on my account; and prayed him, solely on their behalf, to use his influence to procure some mitigation or commutation of my sentence.

To this pathetic appeal I received an immediate answer, couched in the following terms:—

"Sir,

"General Hill having placed in the hands of the general commanding in chief your letter of ——, I am directed by his Lordship to inform you with reference thereto, and to the general Court-martial by which you were tried in July last and sentenced to ten years' transportation, but which sentence her Majesty was most graciously pleased to mitigate to seven years, that his Lordship regrets that he cannot, with due regard to the character and discipline of the service, submit

your case to her Majesty for any further mitigation of the punishment awarded you.

"I am, &c.

(Signed) "FITZROY SOMERSET,
Secretary at War."

This was the death-blow to all my hopes and expectations; by this I was doomed to receive no succour from the fountain of mercy, but was condemned to serve the full term of my wretched captivity. All my letters to my friends (and I had written many) had been unanswered and unnoticed, and I had now become, indeed, a friendless, forsaken, and solitary outcast, an exile from my native land, and an alien from all its sacred ties and affections! What had I now to live for? Nothing but cruel, heartless, and unfeeling bondage. Despair, in all its grim and terrible aspect, threatened me on all sides, against which my oppressed and broken spirit could offer but a feeble resistance. But an all-seeing and ever-wakeful Eye watched over and upheld me, inspiring me with those distant gleams of sunshine, which, like a sea-girt beacon on a dark tempestuous night, illumines with its rays the surrounding obscurity and gloom.

My resolution was at once taken, patiently and perseveringly to encounter every difficulty, privation, and misery to which my banishment would expose me; and I looked forward with the utmost impatience to that momentous period when I should be borne on the vast and trackless deep to those remote regions, where I should at once enter on that probationary era on which would depend my future misery or well-being.

The auspicious day at length arrived, fraught with such vital interest to so many; and we were called by name to attend that muster on British soil which was, fated to the greater portion to be the last. After being served out with new grey clothing, and having gone through the ceremony of ablution, which under circumstances of such excitement was merely nominal, we were examined and inspected by the surgeon-superintendent of the vessel, Dr. Moxey of the Royal Navy, a tall and determined-looking Scotchman, whose countenance denoted characteristic shrewdness and sagacity, accompanied with great energy and decision of character. We were then trans-shipped to our future floating prison, a fine ship named the "Woodbridge," Cap-

tain D—s—n, then lying in the stream off the dock-yard and abreast of the hulks.

Our total number, including those forwarded from Chatham, amounted to two hundred and fifty, of all countries and conditions, both grey-headed hardened sinners and more juvenile offenders, on the visages of many of whom was clearly impressed the stamp of villany in all its hideous deformity. Others there were again, who, by their comely countenances and pleasing exterior, gave promise of better and more profitable fruit. But how deceptive is sin and depravity! how often do the finest forms, the fairest faces, conceal the foulest, fiercest, and falsest passions of our frail and feeble nature!

CHAPTER III.

On ascending from the boat to the deck of the vessel in answer to my name, I was accosted by the surgeon, Dr. Moxey, who, inquiring whether or not I had been a non-commissioned officer in the Blues, informed me, that, upon the strength of certain representations which had been made to him relative to me, touching my character, connexions, &c., he thought fit to nominate me as head boatswain over my fellow-prisoners, and that I should speedily be apprised of further instructions, connected with the duties of my office. I was then ordered to go below.

Following the dusky forms of those preceding me, and pondering on the nature of my new appointment, I at length accomplished this difficult task, where, upon arriving below, all was wrapped in impenetrable gloom, a confused hum, as of so many swarms of bees,

alone denoting the presence of animated beings.

After groping about for some considerable time, and almost committing a suicidal encounter with the upper-deck beams, which were *only* six feet from the lower-deck, and coming into violent collision first with one and then another similarly situated as myself, my vision at length became more acquainted and familiar with the dim light, and I was enabled to distinguish the surrounding objects.

On either side, fore and aft from the main hatchway, were two tiers of "bunks," or sleeping-berths, having a bench running around the lower tier for seats; and in the intervening space hammocks were suspended. The fore and main hatchways were strongly barricaded with large wooden bars, thickly studded with long spike-nails, and having a small low doorway, or wicket-gate, of the same material, only large enough to admit of the passage of one person at a time. Small oblong port-holes, at long intervals on either side, made to open and shut, admitted both air and light, both of which were, as may be imagined, very limited and confined. Each

berth above and below was allotted for four tenants, which, united, formed one mess of eight men. The appurtenances thereto consisted of one small keg or "breaker" for holding water, a tin quart pot, one wooden bowl for the *praties*, and an iron spoon or two: a knife and fork were subsequently added to each mess, as, not being allowed to carry pocket-knives, the daily dividend of beef or pork into eight equal portions was a matter of no small difficulty.

We sailed the evening subsequent to our embarkation; and, when clearing the river, the surgeon came below, and calling the attention of all parties to what he was about to communicate as particularly affecting their future interests, informed them that he had appointed me chief boatswain over them, in conjunction with three others whom he named; and told them that any one who refused to comply with, or neglected to execute any of my orders, would be severely punished; for they must understand, that, in so doing, they disobeyed not me but *him*, as I was his representative and acted under his authority. Much more he said to the same purpose, plainly evincing that secondary mea-

sures would not be adopted. I was then made acquainted with the nature of my vocation, and certainly no irresponsible office it proved, and very far from being a sinecure.

The reader may well imagine the delicate and difficult position in which I had the good fortune to be placed, when he is told that I was held strictly accountable for any and all pilfering, gambling, or fighting; and that the decks below were to be kept perfectly clean and dry by dint of scraping and swabbing; that all should be out of their berths or hammocks at a certain early hour in the morning, and the cleansing and purifying process performed on or before eleven o'clock A. M., ready for the inspection of the captain and superintendent. All this was to be enacted and enforced under circumstances of the greatest difficulty and disadvantage. The former, among men inured from their cradle to acts of dishonesty, dissipation, and violence, would be necessarily an herculean if not an impossible task; and the latter was to be exacted from characters naturally averse to manual labour, (except the more agreeable occupation of picking locks or pockets,) and who had ever been accustomed to set at de-

fiance the laws of God and man. All this, too, was to be done in so limited a sphere of action, and when exposed to the perils of the sea. Yet, incredible as it might appear, a more willing, orderly, and obedient crew (save and except a few incorrigible characters) it was never the lot of any officer to command. They in a little while set to work with an earnestness and good-will which ensured success; and a spirit of emulation being excited, no transport vessel, as was subsequently admitted by the Governor of New South Wales, ever arrived during his (Sir George Gipps's) administration so clean and creditable, both in prisoners and prison, as the Woodbridge.

A detachment of soldiers was of course on board to enforce obedience and keep us all under due control; but the sagacious, politic, and salutary measures adopted by the surgeon-superintendent, powerfully aided by the kind, conciliating, and truly paternal conduct of the captain, would almost alone have ensured submission, and even cheerful compliance. Too much praise cannot be awarded to those gentlemen for their generous, manly, and philanthropic conduct to the friendless unfortunates under their autho-

rity and control, for every indulgence, comfort, and accommodation which could reasonably be expected, or safely allowed, was freely and willingly bestowed—and yet how much was it not in their power to render it otherwise—to make it, in fact, *a floating Pandemonium!*

On getting into what is technically termed *blue water*, our irons were struck off, and all went on well, if not pleasantly. We were allowed to enjoy the benefit of the fine sea-breeze on deck, at first by divisions of fifty or a hundred, and then *en masse*. Bolam, whom I have before spoken of, had been appointed schoolmaster, and many of his youthful pupils were making a favourable progress in writing and arithmetic,—paper and slates being afforded him for that purpose; and by dint of constant attention to his duties, and the unceasing occupation of his thoughts, he was rapidly regaining his former serenity of mind and strength of body.

The prisoners amused themselves chiefly, during the passage, in manufacturing seals, tooth-picks, tobacco-stoppers, and other ornaments out of bones; and likewise a few ingenious and experienced ones, in making

rings, brooches, &c., out of common buttons, at which they were very expert, having, no doubt, long carried on the fraudulent practice of what is termed "ring-dropping."

Our provisions consisted of the customary sea fare, beef and plum-dough, pea-soup and pork, alternately. Biscuit, diluted with tea or cocoa, formed our morning and evening repasts. Three men were appointed as cooks; a galley being set apart for that purpose, and our meals were served cleanly and regularly. The military mess was prepared in a galley on the opposite side of the vessel, and consisted of almost similar fare. During fine weather we dined on deck in the open air, but during the prevalence of stormy or hazy weather we dined below. I could not avoid being amused at the exercise of the same spirit of *pointing*, which prevailed here, as at the hulks, with regard to the mess, as the following instance will demonstrate.

The beef was always served out in eight-pound pieces, which, at an allowance of half-a-pound per man, sufficed for two messes of eight each. When cooked, the beef had to be divided into two lots; and during this pro-

ceeding, the man dissecting, whether from accident or some other cause, always contrived, by a slip of the knife, to cut one piece much larger than the other, and placing the knife transversely along, called upon one of *his* messmates to say which he would have, distinguishing, according to a preconcerted arrangement, the lesser from the greater, and calling his comrade by his *christian* name when the haft rested on the former, and by his *surname*, when on the latter. It invariably happened, therefore, that the rival mess were minus a pound or two on each dividend, and in a short time manifested, by their gaunt and diminished frames, the effects of this provision conspiracy. This *ruse* was, however, soon after exposed, and abolished.

When we reached the Tropics, the heat above and below became almost intolerable, and, from the confined ventilation between decks, especially in calms, the sensation at night was almost suffocating. Wind sails were lowered in each hatchway; but, with no wind to fill them, they were comparatively useless. Wine and lime-juice were now served out at the rate of half-a-pint each man per diem; which, under such circumstances, was a great

and sanitary luxury. The ceremony likewise attending its enjoyment had a beneficial influence both on the mind and body, and tended much to the health and good-humour of the men. At the hour of receiving it we were all mustered upon the main-deck, the quarter-deck being partitioned off by means of a strong bulk-head from the waist and forepart of the vessel, communicating by a small door at either side, where a sentry was always posted, and solely appropriated for the use of the military and their wives. The names were then called, and, for the purpose of exercising the men, and as a preventive to disease, each man entered at one door to the quarter-deck, *danced* to the cask, drank his allowance, and then danced off again, round by the opposite doorway. This, I need not remark, occasioned much mirth to all parties, the officers and their families being at such times on the poop, purposely to enjoy the sport. The steps, as various as the performers, formed altogether a most amusing "ballet."

After a pleasant and prosperous passage of six weeks, we reached the Cape of Good Hope, where we touched for the purpose of

taking in a fresh supply of provisions and water. The features and general appearance of the Cape are already too well known to need any comment from me. Suffice it to say, that it was excessively hot, and after a stay of four days (during which time we had been boarded by a number of shore-boats with fruit, &c.) we again weighed, and once more faced the perils of the mighty deep.

Soon after doubling the Cape we experienced a terrific gale, which at one time imminently threatened the safety of the vessel. Our quarter-deck bulwarks were stove-in, the sea making a clean breach over her; the hen-coops on the poop were washed away, tenants and all, and an immense quantity of water shipped, which inundated the soldiers' quarters and the place appropriated as an hospital, till many of the patients floated in their berths.

During the prevalence of the gale, we were all secured below with the hatches closed and battened down, and symptoms of the most intense apprehension were evinced by many of the hardened desperadoes who were thus cooped up with only a plank between them and eternity, and the angry voice of

their offended Creator shaking the very elements with His power. The howling of the wind through the creaking cordage — the harsh vociferations of the master and mariners — the incessant tread of hurried footsteps — the increasing and choking "heave yo" of the sailors, together with the angry roaring and dashing of the waves, lashing themselves, like an angry lion, into fury, were the only sounds which greeted our awe-struck anxious ears, forming altogether as fearful a combination of terrors as could well be imagined. Some of the men were to be observed on their knees, with outstretched arms, and hands firmly and convulsively clasped, fervently imploring the mercy of that Being whom they had oft so impiously defied, and who now alone could succour and save them—probably the first and only time they had ever addressed Him in tones of humiliation and prayer. Another portion, on the contrary, were to be seen laughing at and deriding the dangers which environed them, seemingly callous to every feeling, and, with a kind of desperate recklessness, singing and joining their voices with the water's rush and tempest's roar without.

The avenging power of a justly offended God was, however, withheld, in pity and compassion to that miserable mass; and the storm, having expended its fury, after the lapse of a few hours, completely subsided, leaving no other vestiges of its might than those which the still swollen and crest-crowned billows afforded. The hatches were again opened, and we were allowed once more to breathe the pure and unconfined air of heaven. That great and inestimable blessing was never more acceptable or more gratefully appreciated than by us, after being pent up for so many hours in almost total darkness, uncertain of our exact position, and the danger which threatened us.

Whether or not it was from the conscience-stirring effects of this storm, and God's apparent wrath, or from some other latent cause, I know not, but certain it is that one of the prisoners, an elderly man, who had always been remarkable for his silent and reserved habits, and the surly and unsociable nature of his disposition, some few days after the tempest, made a full and free confession before the officers of the ship, at his own particular request, of a foul and heartless

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murder which had been committed by him in conjunction with two others, near Harrow-on-the-Hill, adjacent to the metropolis, about twenty years before. The victims were, according to the partial information we obtained, a poor old gentleman and his aged and infirm housekeeper, both near eighty, the former having been suspected of having a considerable sum of ready money by him. The part which the penitent confessed he took in the brutal affair was merely that of holding the front door and keeping watch without, whilst his bloodthirsty associates accomplished the deed within. The confession was duly signed by him, and attested by the presiding witnesses, with an intention of transmitting the same to the Home Authorities immediately on reaching Sidney. But what further steps were taken in the matter I know not, as the murderer, being under sentence for life to Norfolk Island, never landed at Sidney. His confederates, he stated, were then living and in good circumstances in or near London. This confession created a variety of sensations on board, being laughed at by some, condemned by others, but the deed was almost generally execrated.

The unhappy object seemed, however, to have experienced great relief of mind from the step he had taken, and became more cheerful and resigned afterwards.

The wind, which, since leaving the Cape, had been boisterous and baffling, now veered round to a favourable quarter, and we had a fine run with the *trades* until we entered Bass's Straits. These straits, where so fearful and formidable a loss has been so recently sustained, in the total wreck of the unfortunate "Cabaraque" emigrant vessel, and nearly the whole of her miserable freight, four hundred and fourteen of whom perished out of four hundred and twenty-three, men, women, and children, we passed with a fair and gentle breeze, the sailors taking a great number of fish called bouctas, and the albatros, a large species of bird of the buzzard kind, with a baited hook and lead line, both which proved fine eating, the skins of the latter being preserved for future stuffing. The voracious *sea lawyer*, the shark, and the greedy porpoise, likewise contributed to our bill of fare, and were pronounced excellent; the most trifling change or circumstance in so long and wearisome a voyage being gree-

dily grasped at and joyfully entertained, to relieve the tiresome sameness of sea and sky.

With one single exception, nothing of any further moment occurred during our passage worthy of relation, until we hailed with feelings of intense and indescribable emotion, in which anxiety and wonder were paramount, the land-fall of that vast new world, in which were centred our future hopes and destinies. I allude to an affray, which occurred after we had doubled the Cape, between one of the prisoners and a corporal on board.

It appeared on investigation that one of the convicts, named Shaw, was on the forecastle of the ship, where a sentry was posted, washing a shirt or some other article, when the corporal of the guard going forward, ordered him down, and the man not immediately complying with the command, he pushed him, and the prisoner resenting the affront, told the corporal, that, if he did so again, he would knock him overboard, his physical power fully warranting the due performance of the threat. A report was instantly made to the surgeon by the corporal, and the man put in irons, when, after hearing the merits of the case, the former awarded the prisoner a cor-

poral punishment of four dozen lashes, which was duly carried into effect by the ship's boatswain, the offender being tied up to a grating rigged on the quarter-deck. All hands were present to witness the infliction of this punishment, which, though performed by a powerful man with heavy *cats*, was borne with an unflinching fortitude which would have graced a better cause. During this painful ceremony, the military and ship's company were drawn up on the poop to be prepared for any spirit of opposition or discontent which might be evinced on the part of his fellow-prisoners. All, however, passed off peaceably and quietly; no doubt so severe an example had the desired effect. In a situation of such vital responsibility, prompt and decisive measures in the suppression of any thing tending to a spirit of mutiny or insubordination are strictly advisable and unavoidable; for, were undue latitude allowed, what, in so circumscribed and dangerous a sphere of action, and with such a depraved and desperate community, might not be the dreadful consequences! Reflection shudders at the bare supposition.

On nearing the coast of New South

Wales, far as the eye can scan both seaward and landward, nothing but vast and stupendous mountains, densely studded with trees of almost every shape, size, and denomination, met the view, indented with numerous bays, creeks, and inlets; and certainly a fine field for imagination their contemplation afforded.

What were the denizens of those gigantic forests? What were the tribes, if any, who ranged those mighty mountains, where nature, unrestrained, revelled in all her pristine strength and waywardness? These were questions which instinctively suggested themselves to my mind on first beholding them, and formed subjects of intense interest and meditation for me. What my companions' feelings were, I could not define; but mine were of a nature far too powerful for utterance. In a little while I should be enrolled as one among the many branded and degraded outcasts in those vast regions, and that too under circumstances most galling and repulsive. What would be the nature of my future pursuits? What my reward? probably ignominy and death—alone and friendless among thousands. I felt as one entering on

a difficult game of chance or hazard, on the result of which depended his every earthly prospect and possession; all would soon be placed on the toss of a *die*, and the cast I must abide, be it favourable or unfavourable.

Under the influence of some such powerful and overwhelming feelings as these, we at length reached the entrance of Port Jackson, generally termed the Heads, about sunset, on the 7th of March, 1840, sixteen weeks from the date of our leaving England. On entering the harbour, I was much struck with the similitude it bears to Milford Haven, in my native country. There were the same bluff headlands and narrow neck—the same light-houses in appearance, and situated on the same eminence, with the addition of a flag-staff and telegraph. The roads are not, however, so capacious, or possessed of the same advantages as to anchoring-ground as Milford can boast; neither is there so much deep water to be found, excepting in the immediate channel. A reef or bar likewise, close within the Heads, appears a formidable obstacle to strangers, and cannot be safely attempted, excepting at certain points and at

certain times. Moreover, several small islands lie scattered picturesquely over the face of the harbour, one of which is called the "Sow and Pigs," from a resemblance to that cloven-footed race, in that interesting state. "Shark Island" is named from the great number of those dangerous sea-monsters which usually infest it. "Pinch Gut" derives its title from the particularly contracted and not over-burdened state of those useful and necessary appendages to the body corporate, during the time that a government stockade of prisoners was retained there for the purpose of erecting a battery, when their allowances of rations were very limited. "Garden Island," a perfect anomaly, is so called from the circumstance, I suppose, of there not being a single fruit tree or vegetable within the entire limits of its confined space: and the name of "Goat Island" is perfectly undefinable, unless its pristine inhabitants, descendants of the illustrious breed kept by "Robinson Crusoe," during his solitary sojourn on that far-famed island of nursery notoriety, had indeed degenerated into two-legged goats; for there were a number of such animals at that time on the island, whose

particular genus, from their redundancy of hairy covering, it would be very difficult to determine. It had recently been appropriated to the use of Government, as a general magazine for powder, &c., but had formerly been used as a kind of small penal settlement, where prisoners suffering under a local sentence to an "ironed gang," or the governor's displeasure, were generally sent to rusticate and excavate.

The new Government-house, a splendid and spacious mansion, erected in a castellated form, and composed of white freestone, forms a conspicuous and beautiful figure in the foreground, surrounded with a capacious lawn, tastefully laid out in fine gravel-walks, and decorated with various rare and rich exotics, over which is to be seen towering the tall and graceful form of the Norfolk Island pine, which grows with such a novel and truly mathematical precision.

Immediately under the Governor's seat is a large battery, termed "Fort Philip," which completely commands the entire space across the bay; a detachment of artillery, recently sent from Woolwich, occupy this fort. A pilot boarded us, and that night, about 10

P. M., we were riding snugly and quietly at anchor, off the far-famed city of Sidney, safe from the perils and privations of so long and dangerous a voyage.

We remained on board three days after our arrival, during which period the superintendent of the prisoners' barracks, Mr. Timothy Lane, came on board, and examined every man separately and minutely, taking down the particulars of our former pursuits, *convictions*, and places of nativity, with our present crime, sentence, and personal description, embracing the smallest scar visible on any part of us.

After the performance of this ceremony, and on the fourth day from our arrival, we debarked in divisions, being landed in a large launch, immediately under the Government-house. Here, an officer from the barracks was in attendance, and when the complete disembarkation had been effected, we were conducted to Hyde Park barracks.

The town being situated at the back of the bay, we did not pass through it, but merely through what is termed the "Domain," or land attached to the Government-house. After half-an-hour's walk, dressed in full

uniform,—grey jacket, white trousers, and striped woollen caps *à la Cosaque*,—with our bag, baggage, and bedding buckled to our backs, we arrived at the barracks, a large and gloomy-looking building, surrounded with a high wall, having strong folding entrance-doors. Here we were marshalled up in complete battle array, two deep, but in *open order*, ready for the inspection of his Excellency the Governor.

In a short time that functionary arrived, attended by his chief officers, including his private and colonial secretaries, principal superintendent of convicts, and the officer commanding royal engineers. After complimenting the men upon their clean and creditable appearance, and the favourable report which had been made to him of their general conduct during the voyage, Sir George Gipps called out such as had been specially recommended to him by the surgeon-superintendent and captain of the vessel, in which list I had the good fortune to be included, and, after expressing his perfect approbation of our behaviour, he intimated his intention of extending to us every indulgence which the regulations of the colony would au-

thorise and allow. Having duly acknowledged his Excellency's notice, we were dismissed to our respective wards in the barracks, and then locked up, to prevent all communication with any of the old hands who might be in the yard.

At the time of our arrival the different gangs were out at work, and the yard was comparatively empty; but when, at the hour of five in the evening, they returned to their quarters, I really imagined (as troop after troop poured in, in one continuous stream) that they would never cease, and, the before restrained freedom of their tongues being now removed, that the inmates of some gigantic Bedlam had actually broken loose. But what sound is that which rises superior to the confused and commingled din, whose shrill echoes pierce the remotest precinct occupied by the turbulent mass, and stills, as if by magic power, the clash of convict tongues? It is the voice of their *King*—that fearful voice which quells the stoutest heart. Yes, it is the voice of the all-potent Mr. Timothy L——e, (commonly known as *Old Tim*,) and in verity a petty king in these dominions; for no semi-barbaric tyrant ever de-

lighted more in the possession and exercise of unrestrained despotic power than did *Old Tim* over his motley community. He ruled by the rod (or rather *cat*) of fear, and not by love: one word, one look of Old Tim was enough, and the poor wretch's destiny was the dungeon.

As an exemplification of my remarks, and merely to evince the kind of fawning spirit which was recognised in his day, I will relate one anecdote. Two young men, prisoners, both Irishmen, from the county of Cork, (Old Tim's native city,) happened to be returned from their master's private assignment to the service of Government, and being taken to the barracks, were there shorn of their accumulated honours, in the shape of long locks, swallow-tails, and frocks, in accordance with custom. Old Tim was present during the operation, and ascertaining from their brogue that they were countrymen, if not townies, addressed one, asking him if he had ever been in Cork? "Yes, yer honor, I was born there."—"Did you ever hear of a Mr. Timothy L——e there?"—"Yes, yer honor."—"What was he, sir?"—"A very fine nice gentleman, yer honor, and wid plenty of money."—"Ah, very good, sir; I

see you knew him. Here, take this man away, I appoint him as my private messenger."—"Well, sir!" turning to the other, "and pray where did you come from?"—"Arrah, from Cork, yer honor, long life to her!"—"Did you know one Mr. L——e there?"—"Yes, yer honor, very well."—"And what, pray, was he?"—"Arrah, yer honor, no great shakes, only a butter-taster!"—"A butter-taster! you rascal," roared Old Tim; "stand by, watch-house, put this scoundrel in directly, and keep him there till I let him out. I will teach the Cork villain to call me a butter-taster!" The fiat was immediately executed, and the poor fellow, for having displayed more truth than wisdom, was kept there all night. Sound policy dictated the answer of the first, who thereby got promoted to an easy billet.

It was a well-authenticated fact, that this said superintendent was the occasion of more men *taking the bush*, and ultimately coming to an ignominious end, than any one cause in the colony. I am happy, however, to say that his reign was of short duration, for, not long after my arrival, a report having been made to the Governor of his mal-practices, wherein he

was charged, among other things, with purloining and appropriating to his own especial use certain portions of the prisoners' allowance, including the marrow and fat, he was disgracefully dismissed, and another person sent to supersede him. This gentleman, named Small, formerly a lieutenant in her Majesty's Navy, armed with the authority of the Governor's appointment, went to the barracks, and, on making known his errand to "Old Tim," was by that worthy most grossly insulted, and even threatened with pistols and paces, if he did not immediately quit the premises. This, however, the old officer was too skilful a general to acquiesce in, and shewing him his authority, informed him that he might stay as long as he thought fit, but that from the present moment all his power was at an end.

Old Tim finding that all his blustering was of no avail, and that the enemy had gained possession of the outworks, thought it prudent quietly to evacuate the place, but not before he was greeted with several salutes, conveyed as parting benedictions, in no very flattering terms, by such men as happened to be in the yard.

In consequence of the "private assignment" system having at this time been abolished, the numerical strength of the barracks on my arrival amounted to thirteen hundred, exclusive of the addition we brought. The confused and confounding din of so many voices may well be imagined. The copious stream I have before alluded to at length ran out, and the yard was filled with a dense mass of moving forms, of every variety of face and figure. The barrack, indeed, at that period might truly have been assimilated to the box of Pandora, for it certainly contained every evil in human shape—a perfect accumulation of vice and infamy.

After partaking of their evening's meal, a large bell suspended in the centre of the yard was rung, and the men were mustered by name into their respective wards, which could scarcely contain them; and many were mixed among us, an honour which we found to our cost, on the following morning, had been dearly purchased, for almost every portable article worth taking was absent without leave. My own loss, comparatively speaking, was merely nominal, as I had but few personals to boast of, amounting to nothing more than

a pair of shoes, which, being pretty well worn, were scarcely worth stealing; others, however, were more wealthy and less fortunate, and lost various useful, and, to them, valuable articles. There was, however, no remedy, for it was as useless as impossible to point out the thief; and, having been let out at an early hour in the morning, the culprits had every opportunity of concealing or disposing of their ill-gotten booty.

However much poets may boast of "beauty" when unadorned, I did not find any accession to my truly primitive if not dignified state from the absence of those foreign aids of ornament, shoes; but, on the contrary, the gravel in the yard being very sharp, I should have found an additional grace in the presence of such covering. In this state I was compelled to appear when summoned to the yard, where, with many precautionary admonitions as to my future vigilance, I was kindly furnished with an *old* pair, which certainly added somewhat to my comfort, though they proved to be both too long and too loose.

With regard to the rations served out to so many men, they consisted of *hominy* for

breakfast, a thick substance made from *maize-meal*, well boiled in water, which, when cooled, forms a substantial food, one pound of brown bread, and half a pound of animal food: this formed the daily allowance to each person, if I might except the liquor termed soup, in which the fresh meat is boiled, with a slight sprinkling of cabbage-leaf.

When mustered in the morning, soon after daylight and breakfast, the prisoners are formed into so many different gangs, varying in number from twenty to two hundred, according to the nature of their employment. Some are sent to the roads, others to the streets, and others to different forts in progress of erection. An overseer (generally speaking, one of themselves) is appointed to each gang, who marches his men by twos to their respective scenes of operation. During week-days, and when at work, the dinner is sent for by each gang, and brought to the works in hand-carts.

Saturday afternoon was set apart for the men to wash their shirts, which did not occupy long, as their wardrobe was chiefly confined to what they carried on their backs. The shirt, however, must be clean on Sun-

day's parade under pain of punishment. When washed, it was usually dried on the shoulders of the owners, over the jackets, to avoid any experiments in the sleight-of-hand conveyancing, as, so sure as any novice in those peculiar and perplexing mysteries happened to suspend his shirt, or any other article, (no matter how hot or how heavy,) from a peg or paling, and only for one moment turned his back upon it, his face would never more look on it.

Sundays were exclusively devoted to divine service. The convicts were then permitted to attend their respective places of worship in the city of Sidney, under the control of an overseer or messenger. It might very naturally be wondered at, that so large and desperate a body of men could be kept under due control and subjection in a large town, without the aid or presence of a strong preventive force, more especially since their restraint while in barracks is merely nominal. But it must be considered that such men are actuated by powerful personal motives, which render every act of turbulence and every attempt at escape totally subversive of their own interests, and a complete barrier to fu-

ture indulgence. Their reasons may be summed up in a few words;—they are in daily expectation of something favourable turning up. This, and this alone it is, which keeps them under passive subjection and personal restraint.

There was, however, one great omission and want of proper foresight on the part of the legislature with reference to convict discipline then existing, which must necessarily have had a tendency to the most demoralising consequences. I allude to the want of a proper classification of prisoners, according to their respective characters, crimes, and conditions.

In so large a body of men it is but natural to infer that some are not so hardened in iniquity as others, and that the offences of some are light and venial when compared with others. Many there are suffering under that severe penalty for merely their first offence, committed, perhaps, like my own, under circumstances of temporary excitement or desperation; who, were it not for that baneful influence exercised over their better judgment by the direct association and communication with characters of abandoned

profligacy and villany, might be eventually reclaimable.

We all know the force of bad example, and the irreparable injury sustained by evil communications; yet how much more powerful does its influence become when its object has once trod the slippery and dangerous paths of vice, and is of a nature prone to receive and cherish impressions of a wicked and dishonest tendency. Such, however, is the case; and all prisoners, no matter how guilty or guiltless, are, on landing in New South Wales, put on an equality, as far as regards their immediate position and future claims to indulgence.

I need go no further to illustrate these remarks, than to cite the case of the man before mentioned (Bolam), who, though convicted of the most heinous crimes, and a respite from the gallows, was, immediately on landing in Sidney, placed in a clerk's office of considerable respectability in Hyde Park barracks, where he has remained up to the present time, without having ever been required to dirt his hands, or do any menial office whatever. I say this not with a view to detract from the merits of the man, or to

enhance his sufferings, but purely for the purpose of pointing out the inequality of the criminal laws as to their administration, with the undue leniency displayed in some cases and unjust severity in others.

How much sin might not have been prevented, how many souls might not have been saved, had such a salutary measure as distinct classification been adopted; and who, but those who have enacted the present pernicious system will have to account for it? Fortunately for me, my stay in this dangerous locality was not of long duration; as, after the lapse of three weeks; during which I did nothing but walk about the yard, I was appointed to a party of mounted border police, designed for the protection of those squatters situated in remote and dangerous districts, where they were defencelessly exposed to the incursions and barbarous violence of the aboriginal tribes.

This force was first established under an act of the Imperial Parliament, passed in the year 1839, intituled, "An Act further to restrain the unauthorised occupation of crown lands, and to provide the means of defraying the expense of a border police, and chosen

from the military prisoners." These were selected as being more accustomed to the use of fire-arms, and deemed more trustworthy, from the absence of all felonious crimes, of their exercise and power.

Each party of border-police was placed under the immediate control of a Crown land commissioner, and generally consisted of four men and horses. One commissioner was appointed to each district beyond the limits of location, *i. e.* the boundary line laid down as the extent of the police districts, varying in distance according to the amount of population and the facilities afforded for cultivation.

The gentleman to whose party I was appointed had a most remote and extensive district termed Maneroo, distant from Sidney about three hundred miles, and situate not far from the vast and stupendous chain of mountains known as the Snowy Mountains, otherwise called, from their summits being crowned with perpetual snow, "the Australian Alps."

Our party consisted of four policemen, well mounted and armed, a carpenter, bullock-driver, and *scourger*—in all seven. The car-

penter was taken for the purpose of erecting a hut and stabling; the bullock-driver for conducting a team of six bullocks and a dray, laden with ammunition and stores; and the latter personage for the enviable and honourable service of flagellating such poor miserable wretches as might, through misconduct and the decree of the commissioner, be subjected to corporal punishment. Of course, none but prisoners of the Crown were exposed to such a degradation.

This heartless, cold-blooded official volunteers his services to torture his fellow-creatures, and receives a certain salary for cutting the living flesh from the backs of his victims. Even the very hangman, that high functionary of the law and the head of the executive power, is considered, and deservedly so, a far more respectable and reputable character than the scourger throughout the colony, as he, they say, puts men out of their misery, whilst the other is paid for adding to it. He is, however, a necessary evil, and must be endured. I am, however, happy to say that the calling has now become almost extinct, as flogging is nearly, if not altogether, abolished, solitary confinement having been found far more effective.

Thus reinforced we left Sidney early one morning, the commissioner, a little fat personage named L——e, being with us, and all of us dressed *à la militaire*, with green cloth and black braiding, with horses fully caparisoned, and armed individually with a brace of pistols, carbine, and sword, altogether forming no mean or contemptible foe. The supernumeraries of course walked with the dray, but there was a sufficiency of arms on it to have fully furnished them in cases of emergency.

CHAPTER IV.

After a tedious and protracted journey of six weeks, during which we lost our bullocks in the bush for four days and nights, we arrived at our destination, called Cooma Creek, a bleak, barren, inhospitable-looking place, without any particular casualty or rencontre, all safe and sound. The commissioner, who had preceded us when some ninety miles from Sidney, had been dreadfully alarmed for our safety, and was not a little rejoiced when he discovered that no loss or injury had been sustained, more particularly as he had some very valuable private property among the freight.

Having brought from Sidney two or three bales of blankets for the use of the Maneroo tribes of blacks, there were a great many of those poor uncivilized creatures awaiting our arrival, having been apprised by the commissioner of the forthcoming supply, which is gene-

rally distributed once a year; and which, from the coldness of that particular climate, and the almost total absence of any other covering, excepting such as is afforded from the skins of the opossum, they anxiously looked forward to. On perceiving what they termed the "wheelbarrow" approaching, they set up a simultaneous shout, running to meet us, and demonstrating by their wild gestures and actions peculiar to their race the unbounded satisfaction they experienced, readily lending their assistance in unloading the dray, and providing fuel and water for our evening meal.

This being the first time that I had an opportunity of seeing the natives in their primitive state, as our line of march had not presented any to our view, except such as were retained in a half-naturalised state by the settlers on the road, I could not help being much struck with their personal appearance, in which dignity and debasement were so singularly united. The men were for the most part tall, muscular, and well-formed, particularly above the knee; but below that they greatly fell off, having little or no calves, and their shin-bones bend-

ing forwards instead of backwards, as is the case with most black tribes. Their features generally were large, coarse, and repulsive, especially the mouth, but their eyes and teeth were faultless, the former being large, black, and brilliant, and the latter white, even, and regular.

The "black *gins*," as the women are styled, are not remarkable either for beauty or stature, being chiefly short and skinny, with a broad cast of features, resembling much in the size and appearance of their limbs the kangaroo. This, however, may justly be attributed to the fatigue, privation, and drudgery they endure in their irregular and wandering habits of life, for they have to carry all the appurtenances of their liege lords, excepting their implements of war, provide a suitable place and accommodation for their camp, and procure yams, fish, opossums, and such other luxuries as may best suit the palates of their fierce and despotic masters; such pursuits being deemed below the dignity of the male, excepting for his own especial amusement and recreation. They are, however, a very indolent, treacherous, and lethargic race of beings, in whom laziness

and covetousness are the prevailing characteristics.

The weather, on our arrival, was extremely cold and severe, a hard frost having set in; and what rendered it still worse, was the circumstance of our being without any hut or fixed habitation, excepting our tent, in which we could not enjoy the benefit of a fire. The carpenter and his mates domiciled under the dray, having a tarpaulin overspread, which in that country forms a very common and comfortable bivouac.

Everything having been found correct, and in accordance with the invoice, operations were commenced for our future quarters, and by dint of severe labour, there being an abundance of timber for building purposes convenient to the spot, we, in a short time, under the direction of the carpenter, contrived to erect a two-roomed hut, roofed with bark, one apartment of which was assigned for the use of the *attachés*, and the other for the police.

As I have not before spoken of the peculiar features of the country during our journey, which were many and various, I may as well give a brief outline before I proceed

further; for to those who have never witnessed them, the description may prove not uninteresting. The general method of travelling through these rugged regions, where so many impediments in the transit of goods and produce occur, it might be as well, also, to notice.

I have before remarked that the country immediately adjacent to Sidney is of a low and scrubby character, with a very limited and stunted growth of timber, which may be accounted for by the great consumption of wood for firing during the many years previous to the discovery of that valuable necessary, coal, at Newcastle, some distance from the Australian metropolis. In fact, so scarce is timber for fuel at the present day, in and about Sidney, that numbers make an excellent livelihood by vending this commodity to those who cannot afford to purchase coal; the sum of half-a-crown being charged for a small barrow-load, cut up into bundles like matches, and six shillings for a one-horse cart load, which, in a country where timber so prodigally abounded, almost to the exclusion of cultivation, is indeed remarkable.

The scenery, as you proceed, gradually

changes its character, assuming a far more romantic and luxuriant aspect, being not only densely wooded with large and lofty trees, but well watered; and gentlemen's seats, where the axe has laid low the growth of ages, in various rich and well-cultivated pastures, are thickly scattered over the intervening space. On what is termed the great Southern, or Port Philip and Maneroo Road, the first town of any importance is Liverpool, distant from Sidney twenty miles, leaving a very pretty and flourishing little township termed Parramatta on the left, where the Governor's country residence is placed, with an extensive domain. That great receiving *dépôt* of the frail and unfortunate daughters of our erring parent Eve, the female factory, is likewise there; but the number of its inmates now is very much diminished, owing to recent regulations carried into beneficial operation, and it will no doubt in a short time become a perfect dead-letter. Certainly its total abolition and extinction, together with that most disgraceful monument of iniquity, Hyde-Park barracks, will be an act of justice and judgment on the part of the citizens of Sidney. Until such is the case, they will form a bar-

rier to freedom, and New South Wales can never plume itself on being an emancipated country.

After leaving Liverpool the scenery becomes still wilder and grander, and much more mountainous, and so continues until Berrima is reached, a large though irregular town, distant ninety miles from Sidney, where the most conspicuous buildings are the gaol and court-house, it being an assize town, where a circuit court is holden about every quarter. It, however, boasts of several *other* houses of entertainment besides the gaol, as numerous sign-boards attached to neat and clean stone-buildings incontestably denote, guaranteeing good accommodation for "man and beast," where it too often happens, that the *beast* proves the *more rational* of the two creatures, and that its owner and itself change their relative positions.

Between Berrima and Liverpool are two other small townships, named respectively Campbell Town, and Stonequarry, the former being a pretty and promising place, consisting of one long street, with a court-house and police barracks, the latter of comparative insignificance. When staying

here on our route upward, an adventure of rather a ludicrous nature occurred, illustrative of the manners of the inhabitants. Having arrived at the place at rather a late hour, both hungry and fatigued, I inquired for the most eligible spot for camping for the night, and was shewn a small and vacant piece of ground directly facing the only inn in the township, which, from its proximity to the water, a great desideratum in that country, presented every advantage. Here we accordingly drew up, unyoked the bullocks, unsaddled the horses, and turned them into the neighbouring bush to feed, whilst preparations were being made for our evening repast. We had, however, scarcely completed these necessary arrangements, when a man, well mounted, and dressed in the garb of a gentleman, rode up, apparently the worse for liquor, and fiercely and peremptorily ordered us immediately to remove from what he termed his allotment of ground. I endeavoured to soften his irascibility, and soothe his ruffled spirit, by informing him who we were, and that our officer, the commissioner, was then at the inn, and would no doubt give him every satisfaction on the point at issue. This rig-

marole, as he elegantly styled it, he pretended not to believe, calling us d——d bushrangers and impostors; and, threatening instantly to demolish us, he furiously galloped off.

Finding all my remonstrances vain, and being well aware, from the nature of our pursuits, that the moment justified the measure, I was determined not to submit to such an arbitrary act, but, should occasion require it, to repel force by force. Accordingly I prepared my party for the worst, drawing them up in front of the dray, well armed to meet any emergency. This salutary step had scarcely been effected, when we saw by the light of a fine moon a dark mass approaching, which, on nearer observation, we discovered to consist of the *posse comitatus* of the Stonequarry civil corps, to the number of four, led on by our gallant foe on horseback. Seeing our formidable front, however, the advance drew back, and sounded a parley, which was granted, at a very respectful distance, he inquired what were my intentions. I informed him mildly, but resolutely, that I was determined to retain my position, and protect the property committed to my charge at any risk; and that,

should any effort be made by him or his coadjutors to interfere with or molest us, we should deem ourselves fully justified in having recourse to our arms, and treating them as midnight marauders and bushrangers.

This threat had the desired effect on his partisans, as they unanimously resolved to have nothing to do in the matter, and rightly thinking that discretion was the better part of valour, quietly retired to their own quarters, leaving us undisputed masters of the field. The blustering bully, finding all his efforts useless, and being perhaps partially sobered at hearing the click of so many carbine locks, compromised the matter by inviting us to partake of a glass of grog at his expense, which we of course complied with, and we remained unmolested the remainder of the night.

On leaving Berrima the features of the country became completely changed, the population thinner, and travelling more difficult. Nothing but a vast and almost boundless extent of forest land, consisting of lofty and inaccessible ranges towering to the clouds, present themselves to the view; with huge trees, perfect leviathans of the wilds,

whose age one would imagine coëval with the Deluge. Through these the road winds its sinuous course, deviating, in some places, almost transversely from the desired course, to avoid contact with some lofty and insurmountable barrier. Hard granite principally forms the bed of these stupendous steeps; and the mazes of the forest present but a barren and scanty vegetation for the depasturing of the numerous teams and herds of cattle generally travelling on these roads.

The mode of transit of colonial produce from the interior to the Sidney market is very slow, tedious, and often difficult, being performed by means of drays, usually drawn by eight, ten, or twelve bullocks, according to the nature of their load. The distance accomplished generally in one day averages from twelve to fourteen miles, as the roads, independent of being hilly, are rough, rugged, and heavy; and the bullocks become not only footsore, but very weak from the want of sufficient food. In some places, indeed, the vegetation is very rich and luxuriant, but not available for pasture, from the absence of water, which in so warm a climate is indispensable; and most teams, when travel-

ling, have certain stated stages where they invariably camp.

The method of "camping" is picturesque and diverting, forming, from a combination of circumstances, both natural and artificial, a perfect picture for study and contemplation. It often happens that four, six, and eight teams *bivouac* at the same place, frequently some wild and romantic spot completely embedded in the mountains, with nothing but trees, rocks, and ranges on all sides and above. Here, then, as twilight settles into night, may be seen the ruddy glare of a gigantic fire, whereon huge trees are piled by the joint efforts of many men, reflected on the bronzed and blackened faces of a motley and dirt-begrimed circle, who discuss with the true appetite of bullock-drivers the savoury merits of a hunch of salted beef hot from the pot, and a junk of *damper* bread, seasonably diluted with a pot of tea to each individual. In the distance, and down some deep dell, may be heard the tinkling sound of the small bell attached to the necks of the weary oxen, intended to denote their immediate locality when required in the morning; and, as the night progresses, the

deep and melancholy howl of the wild native dog prowling for food, is re-echoed on every side.

Speaking of the native dog, I may remark that they are very fierce and destructive to sheep, being a mixture of the wolf and fox, combining the ferocity of the former with the cunning of the latter; in shape, indeed, they much resemble our native foxes, but are much larger in size. Very good sport is afforded in hunting them with hounds, and many packs are kept in the colony for that purpose; but, from the natural features of the country, few facilities are afforded to their followers, excepting where there happens to be a large tract of plain. The number of sheep destroyed by this cunning, bold, and destructive animal during the course of a year throughout the colony is incalculable, as, when rushed upon in their hurdles in the night by a native dog, sometimes fifty, from that to five hundred, are lost in the bush, and in such case fall an easy prey to their vigilant enemies. Traps are set for them, and a reward is given by the sheepholder to his shepherds or watchmen for every one they have the good fortune to catch. The mode adopt-

ed is by means of a large and hollow tree, (many of which are to be found in the bush,) which is sawed off at either end level, leaving the trap about six feet long. One end of the trap is then securely fastened up with strong timber, leaving the other open. A short upright is fixed about the centre of the upper part, on which traverses a long pole running the full length of the trap. To one end of this pole is fixed a sliding door, made to fit the open space at the end of the trap, and, when lifted, the other end is attached to a string or wire, to which is fastened a piece of meat at the inner end of the trap; so that, on entering the trap and touching the food or bait, the door falls and cuts off all retreat. Here, then, they are taken alive, and well baited by the sheep-dogs until killed. The shepherds call them their best friends; since, were it not for them, the shepherds would be in a measure useless and unnecessary: there is not a little truth in the observation. They are not, however, very formidable to man, unless he is surprised by them in the night-time when asleep or intoxicated, and unable to defend himself. At such times they are, indeed, dangerous, as many in-

stances have been known where the skeletons of such unlucky adventurers have been discovered in the bush deprived of every particle of flesh. When taken, their skins are generally preserved for the purpose of forming mats for carriages, or winter cloaks.

On my first travelling in the interior I was much astonished and amused at the curious method of baking bread when on the road, or even at home. This peculiar sort of bread is termed "damper," and consists merely of flour and water, which, when duly mixed or kneaded, is, without any yeast made into a large and flat cake, about three or four inches thick, and in that state put into the hot embers of the wood-fire, smoothed down for the purpose, where it is covered up with the same, and so left for one or two hours until thoroughly baked. It is then taken out and dusted with a cloth or horse-tail, and presents a fine brown crust, without a particle of dust or dirt. It is reckoned most sweet and wholesome food, many persons giving it the preference to oven bread. When I first saw it made, I certainly imagined that it was so much good flour wasted; but I was soon undeceived, and induced to change my

opinion. There is another sort of bread made when in a hurry, called "beggars on the coal," which is made very thin like our girdle-bread, and merely placed *on* the hot ashes, and afterwards turned: about five minutes will suffice to make it.

The general fare in New South Wales, particularly in the interior, among the settlers and respectable farmers, is bread, beef, and tea, three times a day, with sometimes pumpkins, or some other kind of vegetable. I can venture to assert, that no other country on the face of the habitable globe consumes more tea, sugar, and tobacco, according to the average proportion of population, than Australia. These commodities are in constant and hourly requisition.

To complete my sketch of a "bush *bivouac*," I have only to say, that, after the supper and other matters, not omitting the pipe, have been disposed of, the beds are laid down under the drays, covered with their tarpaulins, and in some instances under the canopy of heaven alone. A large fire is left burning in the centre of the camp, with plenty of rotten fuel ready to replenish it alongside. Thus the night is passed; and

breakfast is prepared and discussed in a manner similar to the supper, whilst some of the parties go in pursuit of the bullocks.

But there is a most villanous and pernicious system prevalent in New South Wales, which is replete with the most serious consequences and severe losses to the owners of property. I allude to the practice adopted by some mercenary and unprincipled scoundrels, generally settlers' men, of *planting** the bullocks of the various teams on the road, and so keeping them until their owners are induced to offer a reward for finding them. I need not say that the reward is very soon claimed, as, according to the old and vulgar axiom, "those who hide can find." This custom is far too general, and the great and irreparable injury sustained by the owners in the loss of property from spoliation or other damage, or the loss of time in the markets, is inconceivable, not to speak of the amount of reward paid for the restoration of the cattle. Unhappily, the peculiar features of the country afford too many facilities for the exercise of these dishonest practices, and pre-

* Hiding.

clude the possibility of detection. I have not the smallest doubt our bullocks were subjected to the same durance.

'When travelling in company, should the drays come to any severe pinch, a very excellent plan is adopted to surmount it. All the teams in the rear unite their leading bullocks to the front team, sometimes to the number of thirty, and, thus reinforced, it easily overcomes the difficulty. When at the top, the bullocks are again unhooked, and added to the leading ones of the front team, brought down again to the next in rotation, and so on until all have ascended: they then resume their regular line of march. Without this, in many places, they could not proceed.

The next town to Berrima is Goulburn, one of the most flourishing townships in any part of the interior, possessing the most eligible site, both in scenery and healthfulness. It is, moreover, large and respectable, and contains many extensive mercantile establishments and great stores. The houses are chiefly built of brick or stone, and its neighbourhood boasts of many wealthy and respectable families. One great fault, however, is, that the new gaol, which has been

recently erected, is situated in the centre of the town, and surrounded by a dead and gloomy wall, which gives the place a most sombre and melancholy appearance, independent of the building occupying the most valuable portion of the township. This was, indeed, a great oversight on the part of the local government and the inhabitants of Goulburn. Despite, however, all these drawbacks, Goulburn promises in a short time, when the contemplated railway is carried into effect, to be one of the most prosperous places in the colony.

The scenery from Goulburn to Maneroo is rather more diversified in appearance, having several large plains, covered with countless flocks of sheep, intersecting the route; in other points, the same lofty and irregular scenery prevails. There are many huts and stations on the road, with here and there, at long intervals, houses of entertainment; but these in the interior are rendered almost useless and unnecessary, from the proverbial and characteristic hospitality of the inhabitants, no question being asked, and no remuneration required, of any wayfarer.

I have myself seen at one house in Mane-

roo, the residence of a worthy, open-hearted, and universally respected gentleman, named D——l, a man of large property, as many as thirty persons sitting down to supper, served in a homely though substantial style; beds were afterwards laid down for them on the floor, or any other convenient place. The same hospitality was displayed on the following morning, when they were regaled with breakfast; after which they proceeded on their journeys, without the proprietor of the place knowing one amongst them, even by name.

This was not a solitary instance, but almost a usual occurrence, in those days; but now affairs wear a changed aspect, and the same scenes could scarcely be recognised. Bankruptcy, with all its baneful consequences, has made sad ravages in those once flourishing establishments, and their generous proprietors have sunk to dust or into obscurity.

To return to my narrative. I was retained as clerk to the commissioner, who, being very corpulent, and fond of good living, was much attached to the ease of domestic life, and failed not to avail himself of it on every

opportunity. Shooting was also a favourite pastime of his when not attended with too much labour; and he consequently committed great slaughter among the wild pigeons and cockatoos, which abounded at Cooma. The latter bird makes excellent soup, but being remarkably wary and sagacious, is difficult to be approached; in consequence of which, the commissioner had recourse to a perfectly novel and original stratagem to get at them. He caused a large and leafy branch of gum-tree to be cut, armed with which, and his double Manton, and screened from observation by the foliage, he contrived to get within gun-shot of the enemy, who, being very gregarious, generally left many killed and wounded on the field. The success of this method quite delighted the little commissioner, who contemplated in the spoils before him the attributes of many a good tureen of soup to cheer his inward man. It was perfectly exhilarating to see with what an air of self-importance and satisfaction he collected the fruits of his prowess and invention, and consigned them, with many an injunction, to the safe custody of his convict cook.

Poor little gentleman! what a pity it was that such things as bushrangers or blocks should ever interfere with so agreeable a diversion. How quietly and calmly would he have gone on the even tenor of his way! But, unfortunately for him, there were other things besides cockatoos and wild pigeons to attend to, and his anxiety and alarm at times were truly pitiable; not that he underwent much fatigue from riding or writing, as he generally imposed labours of this kind on me, but then there was the fearful responsibility—what could divest him of that? According to the duties laid down for the commissioner, he had to visit every station in his district once every half-year, to hear and redress grievances, and prevent trespasses or encroachments. This, of itself, was a mighty task for one so portly, but, besides this, he had to assess all sheep, horses, and horned cattle throughout his district each half-year, and serve the settlers with due notices of what they had to pay to the colonial treasurer. To deliver these notices, attend him during his circuit, pursue bushrangers, and keep in check the aborigines, was our particular and sometimes dangerous duty.

The term *bushranger*, it will be recollected, applies to runaway felons, generally men of the most desperate character, who, hopeless of receiving any other liberty or indulgence, or perhaps, as has often been the case, driven to a state of desperation by the heartless tyranny and oppression of their masters, are tempted to abscond and *take the bush*, where, cut off from the pale of forgiveness by the step they have adopted, and with a price set on their heads, they defy all laws both moral and divine. Conscious that their case is hopeless, and that all men's hands are against them, they retaliate on all men, and procuring fire-arms at the first hut or station that they come to, rob, plunder, and murder all that come in their way, or offer the slightest resistance. They generally associate in gangs of three, four, and sometimes eight, well armed and mounted, taking horses from any traveller on the road, or from any station where they best suit their fancy. After a severe chase or long run, when their cattle are blown or knocked up, they turn them adrift, and, taking the saddle and bridle with them, proceed direct to the nearest house, and re-furnish themselves.

Some years ago, the colony was infested by many dangerous, desperate, and determined characters of this description, who set at open defiance all the police of the country. Many were the rencounters which took place, with various success, and many the severe pursuits and hair-breadth escapes of the outlawed bands. One man in particular, named Donoghue, an Irishman, by his heroic conduct and determined bravery, completely immortalised his name in the annals of bush-ranging, and to the present day is spoken of in terms of pity and admiration. This man was in the bush many years, and constantly contrived to elude the active vigilance and keen pursuit of the mounted police.

Many amusing anecdotes are still told of him, and, though long since dead, he yet lives in song, owing to his brave and romantic exit. Among all his atrocities he was never known to plunder the poor and needy, but, on the contrary, took from the rich to bestow on the poor. From being a prisoner of the Crown himself, he cherished an insuperable aversion to such masters or overseers as tyrannised over their assigned servants; and on one occasion, whilst pursuing

his avocation in the interior, being well armed and mounted, he met two superintendents of large establishments riding together, both of whom were known to him, and one of them being as remarkable for his kindness to his men, as the other was for his cruelty and oppression. Accosting the latter and presenting a pistol to his head at the same moment, he ordered him to prepare for instant death, as he had only five minutes to live. The poor wretch was of course horrified at the threat, and entreated him to spare his life. This Donoghue would not listen to; but, telling him who he was, and that he had made inquiry into the character of the other, desired him not to waste such precious moments, but to use the little time allowed him in making his peace with his God. During this conversation, the other man, hearing who was the attacking party, and fearing that his turn would come next, ensconced himself and horse behind a tree, and pulling a large cavalry pistol from his coat, cocked, and deliberately covered the bushranger with it, who was totally ignorant of the action, being occupied in the manner described: unfortunately the piece proved faithless to its trust,

and missed fire. Donoghue hearing the snapping of the pistol, coolly turned himself in his saddle and gave one look towards the place whence it proceeded. Its owner was at that moment in the act of rubbing his thumb nail over the flint preparatory to another attempt, and, having completed his preparations, again presented, and again missed. "Click away, my fine fellow," said Donoghue; "I will settle accounts with you directly;" and instantly turning to the first object of his wrath, who sat pale and trembling on his horse, awaiting the execution of his doom, he inquired if he had done praying. On the other's answering with supplication for mercy on earth, he instantly pulled the trigger, and the man fell a brainless corpse to the ground. Then quietly returning the empty pistol to the holster-pipe, he pulled out another, and rode up to the poor fellow behind the tree, who, finding all his efforts useless in discharging his pistol, had passively awaited his fate without the power to move, and was now utterly paralysed at the fearful fate of his friend. Donoghue requested him to give up his pistol, which was instantly handed to him, when, taking it by the barrel,

he dashed it against the tree, and shivered the stock to atoms. "There, sir, never trust your life to such useless tools again. You may thank your good name for not sharing the same fate as yonder tyrant, who will never flog another." So saying, he rode slowly away. This was the only cold-blooded murder recorded against him.

At the time of Donoghue's death he had been pursued in company with three others upwards of two hundred miles, by a party of four mounted police, and two aboriginal natives as *trackers*, of whose surprising faculty I shall speak further hereafter. When overtaken, the four bushrangers were camped in a deep dell or gully, near a ravine or water-course, with their horses tethered and feeding close by. Upon the policemen perceiving the smoke of their fire, they immediately dismounted, and, with a view of surprising them, advanced on foot, but it so happened that they were not unperceived, as they had been detected coming over a neighbouring range of hills. The three cowardly comrades of Donoghue instantly proposed to beat a speedy retreat while it was yet in their power, which was

indignantly objected to by Donoghue, who replied, with a spirit worthy of a better cause, "No! go who will—*I* remain. There is but man for man, and we have, of the two parties, the advantage." This, however, had not the desired effect on his chicken-hearted associates, who intimated their intention of retiring, which Donoghue assented to, calling them base cowards, and declaring that he alone would stand his ground while life remained. The three cowards then took to their horses just as the police approached, and, without firing a shot, galloped off, leaving their brave though unfortunate comrade to perish alone. This he did, but not before he had brought two of his assailants to the ground, including the corporal, and had seriously wounded a third, when, in levelling his piece at the remaining uninjured foe, his enemy forestalled him, and shot him in the centre of his forehead. He fell—nobly fell, where he had stood alone and unsupported. To commemorate the event, his name, with that of the day and date on which he was shot, were carved in the bark of the tree which sheltered him, which is still to be seen thickly perforated with the

marks of balls. So died Donoghue, the king of bushrangers, whose deeds are still chaunted amidst the scenes of his daring.

The peculiar faculty acquired by the aborigines in tracking men or horses through the dense and difficult masses of the forest, over rocks and through rivers, is really astonishing. They evidently possess a kind of intuitive perception and instinctive knowledge in such pursuits. They have so keen and powerful a gift of vision, that they are able to distinguish marks in the long grass, dry underwood, and on barren rocks, which to any other would be utterly invisible. Long practice in the chase of wild animals, on which, in their primitive state, they entirely subsist, may enable them to do this; but it is certain that, when once put on the right scent or track, like bloodhounds, they seldom lose it. Instances have occurred where the trackers have pursued with undeviating certainty a party of bushrangers for three hundred miles, through deep gullies, over lofty ranges, and almost trackless plains, and have eventually succeeded in running them down.

When a party of these fierce and truly

formidable marauders rob or "bail up" a station, possibly remote from any other, intelligence is instantly forwarded to the nearest mounted police-station, whence a body of men instantly repair to the scene of action, taking with them one or more trackers, who are retained and clothed by the Government at every police barracks. They are then put on the track, whether of foot, horse, or dray, and follow the same to the place of concealment, camping at night on the track, and pursuing it on the following morning. Immense property in this way has been recovered, but much more is no doubt still secreted and buried in the confines of the bush.

When practicable, bushrangers generally endeavour to prevail on some shepherd to drive his flock of sheep over their tracks to elude pursuit; and in some instances this *ruse* has succeeded. Bush-ranging, however, is now almost unknown in New South Wales, as the number of prisoners is so greatly diminished, and conditional liberty so easily attainable.

CHAPTER V.

THE extent to which tyranny was formerly carried on with regard to the assigned servants throughout the Colony, is almost incredible. Any large settler or squatter in those days could, on application, obtain from the Government a certain number of convicts, according to the strength of his establishment, and, in return for their free labour, was merely required to clothe and feed them. Many there were who considered such poor wretches in the light of beasts of burden, and exacted from them almost proportionate labour, or, in default of it, from illness, incapacity, or any other cause, immediately sent them to the nearest bench of magistrates, with a note requesting that so many lashes, sometimes fifty or seventy-five, might be inflicted on the bearer, and that he then be returned to service, concluding with a friendly enquiry after wife and family, &c. This was the

summary method adopted in those days, when tyranny and *triangles* were the order of the day.

"In reference to this subject a rather amusing anecdote is related, which tends to demonstrate the truth of my observations. A squatter's assigned servant, in the interior, having incurred the displeasure of his master for some neglect or disobedience, was sent by him with a note, addressed to the police magistrate of the adjoining district, distant about seventy miles, which he was to deliver to the chief constable, and afterwards to return home. The poor fellow, ignorant of the purport of the note, went on his way rejoicing, and having travelled nearly sixty miles of the distance, was overtaken by another man going to the same place. As his master had strictly enjoined him to make haste home, he thought it an excellent opportunity of shewing his vigilance and alacrity, and requested this man to deliver the note for him. This was readily agreed to; and with many thanks on the part of the original bearer, who turned to retrace his steps, he received the important document and pursued his journey alone. Not dreaming for one

moment what were the contents of the note, the obliging friend, who was himself a prisoner of the Crown, on his arrival at the township, sought out the chief constable, and delivered the note. That zealous functionary having opened and perused it, immediately consigned the astonished bearer to the safe keeping of the lock-up, and shortly afterwards bringing him out again, informed him that his master had requested that a corporal punishment of fifty lashes should be inflicted upon him forthwith, which the magistrate had confirmed; and despite all his protestations that he was not the man, that his master and himself were on the *best of terms*, he was made to strip, tied up to the triangles, and received the full punishment. On being let down, and ordered to go home, he exclaimed, "Well, by Heavens! this beats bull-baiting! Catch me carrying another letter. D——n me, if I don't knock the first fellow down that asks me to do so." The innocent cause of his suffering returned quietly to his master, informing him that he had safely delivered the letter, and that it was *all right*. "I am glad *you think so*," said his master, chuckling inwardly, yet wondering much at his *sang*

froid: When he subsequently heard of the *mistake*, he laughed heartily.

This system was, however, thanks to the mild and humane administration of Sir Richard Bourke, and his successor Sir George Gipps, soon abolished, and a more just and impartial one introduced. Subsequently, under the latter governor, the private assignment was entirely abolished, when transportation to New South Wales was suspended, and many assigned servants were withdrawn from their masters, with a view to prevent the exercise of any unjust control over their future liberty, which had been carried on to a most pernicious and alarming extent.

The course generally adopted in such cases was the following:—When an assigned servant, say a lifer (that is, one sentenced for life), after the usual probationary period of eight years had expired, had become eligible, from good conduct and servitude, for the indulgence of a ticket of leave, (which ticket exempts him from Government employ, and enables him to work in any one chosen district for his own particular benefit,) his master, conscious that when he left him he could not obtain another bond servant, and that, if

he retained his services after he obtained his ticket, he would be compelled to pay him a free man's wages, generally contrived, on some frivolous, and often *false* charge, to get him punished prior to the time allotted. This punishment, according to the convict regulations, would defer and prevent his liberty for two years longer, during which period, of course, he would serve as before; and in the course of that time his master would again contrive to take him to court, and add a still further probation.

This was a very common practice, especially among the inferior squatters and settlers, and its baneful effects may be readily imagined, many hopeless wretches having been driven to *take the bush.* In consequence of repeated complaints and representations, however, made both verbally and by petition to his late excellency Sir George Gipps, of this gross and unwarrantable abuse, that just officer immediately proclaimed, that, on any settler having occasion to punish his assigned servant, the man was to be immediately returned to the service of Government. This effectually remedied the evil, and few if any punishments afterwards occurred.

I remained with the commissioner upwards of twelve months, during which period nothing of material importance occurred, our chief duties being, as I before stated, to serve the half-yearly assessment notices to the squatters on the Crown lands. The amount of assessment paid on cattle, sheep, and horses for the year by each stockholder was as follows:—For every horse 6*d.*; for every horned beast, including calves above six months old, 3*d.*; and for every sheep, inclusive of weaned lambs, 1*d.* This, in a country where stock, particularly the latter, is so numerous, amounts to an enormous revenue. Each squatter sends in to the commissioner of the district every half-year a return of his increase since the last payment, by which the assessment notices are made out, and the amount is paid into the hands of the colonial treasurer, either personally or by agent, within one month from the date of service of the notice. In default of this periodical payment, no future licence is allowed until the arrears are paid, and a double fee is chargeable on the renewal of the same. The price of a squatter's licence is ten pounds annually; and the limits of each

squatter's run is marked out by the commissioner, according to his amount of stock, and defined by land-marks, creeks, or rivers, where practicable. Any one encroaching on such run is liable to be punished for trespass. Impounding and damages are likewise authorised and allowed.

Travelling in these remote districts, from their limited and widely-extended population, is very difficult and dangerous, not so much from the native blacks, who are in most colonised parts peaceable and quiet, as from losing your way in such trackless regions, where the features of the surrounding country bear such a similitude. In many places over which, during my abode in the colony, I have had occasion to travel, there were no roads whatever, but you had to find your route by means of what is termed a *marked line of tree-road*, meaning trees marked with a tomahawk in the bark, or otherwise by land-marks pointed out to you from one station to another. This, where stations are from twenty to thirty miles apart, renders your task very difficult and hazardous indeed. Many times the traveller in the wilds of Australia has to take up his lodgings for one,

two, or three nights under the shelter of a rock or large tree, with only one comfort, namely, abundance of fuel for burning, should he happen to possess a tinder-box, which few experienced hands travel without. The blacks procure fire by the truly primitive process of rubbing two pieces of wood together, the one hard and the other soft, dry, and porous, which, by dint of friction, become ignited. The method has, however, been often described.

Few men travel in the bush without being armed; and the mounted police have to question every doubtful or suspicious-looking person they meet as to his civil condition, whether free or bond, and very often they find some very *uncivil* parties. All free persons are supposed to carry credentials about them certifying their freedom. The emigrant must be able to produce a certificate of his ship's clearance; the emancipist, one who has served his conditional term, of his "emancipation;" the "free by servitude," he who has served his full sentence, is required to show his "certificate of freedom;" and the ticket of leave-holder, his printed ticket. Should any one be so un-

lucky as not to possess any of these documents, he is supposed to be a convict illegally at large, and is liable to be taken into custody, and forwarded a close prisoner in irons to Sidney for identification; and should he eventually prove a free man, he is discharged, without the least possible chance of redress. The rules of the Colony, and the anomalous nature of its community, fully warrant and justify this mode of proceeding. Instances of the necessity of being provided with these credentials were of frequent, nay, almost daily occurrence. Many prove to be what they are taken for, who have been for years in the bush. But now the laws, though as stringent as ever, are not so rigidly carried into effect, from the necessary diminution of prisoners; and were additional sentences or accumulative punishments abolished, the colony would speedily work out its own emancipation. Until this be the case, such a desirable and beneficial result will be attended with much delay, since, whenever any convict incurs a sentence to an ironed gang, the treadmill, or cell, the term of punishment, whether it be three years or seven days, is added to his original or home

sentence, independent of its deferring his indulgence.

My duties as clerk and corporal were very severe, as I had generally to accompany the commissioner during his periodical visits to the settlers. On one occasion we came to a large river, which barred our course, and could only be crossed by means of a canoe, of which the proprietor was a big black fellow. The commissioner was determined to pass in this frail and shallow skiff, which was only formed from a large sheet of bark, compressed at both ends. Being, as I have before stated, a fat and portly personage, his unwieldly weight, added to the black's, brought the light and oscillating structure to the water's edge, and they had much difficulty in keeping her afloat. At length the signal was given to push off, which the black pilot laughingly complied with, and the fragile bark was launched with its goodly freight into the current of the stream. I remained on the bank with the horses, intending to follow and swim over with them; but I could not repress my mirth when I perceived the canoe, with gyratory motion, whirled rapidly along in the centre of the stream,

which happened to be unusually flooded at the time. In vain the black fellow plied his paddles; in vain he strove to guide his unruly charge to the opposite bank. All would not suffice, and they were borne helplessly along, like a huge bubble on the tide. One fearful, anxious look was cast by the commissioner at the foaming flood, which boiled like barm around him; another full of envy, regret, and despair, at myself and horses, safely and composedly fixed on *terra firma*, when the slender skiff, impelled more fiercely than before, threw him off his equilibrium, and striving to recover himself, he pitched headlong into the stream, upsetting with the surge both blackey and his canoe, and shooting, with the velocity of a comet, into the depths below, as if he had been the most expert pearl-fisher imaginable. The black scarce wetted his head, and seemed like a huge Newfoundland dog disporting in the water. After a while, and many yards below the scene of his capsize, like some gigantic float, up bobbed the commissioner, and, with one mighty gasp, yelled forth a despairing shriek for help; then, as if not satisfied with appearances above, again he bobbed down,

seemingly well pleased with the elements below. Again he appeared, when in an instant the black dived with the velocity of an arrow immediately under the spot, and, intercepting him when sinking, brought him to the surface firmly grasped in one hand. In a few minutes afterwards he was safely landed on the same bank from whence he had so unluckily embarked, looking far more like some river-god, or a subject of the sea-king, than a C. C. L. I had the greatest difficulty to control my laughter at his deplorable plight, and the dolorous tones with which he spoke in terms of reproach and upbraiding to his grinning companion and preserver. He did not attempt the passage again, and we were therefore compelled to make a considerable *détour* to prosecute our journey.

Another ludicrous adventure, full of great vexation and annoyance to the commissioner, occurred, I was informed, some time previous to my joining him. A noted bush-ranger, named Curran, after whom there was a hot pursuit, was reported to be in Mr. L——e's immediate neighbourhood, and that zealous and efficient officer was strictly enjoined to keep a sharp look-out for him, as

there was a heavy reward for his apprehension. This was of itself a sufficient inducement, and every precautionary measure was accordingly adopted.

Early on the ensuing day, a well-mounted and well-dressed gentleman was seen very leisurely and quietly wending his way towards the commissioner's residence, where he inquired for that important personage, who happened to be at home, and he was shewn in. Mr. L—— immediately arose on seeing a stranger, and, with great courtesy and politeness, requested his visitor to be seated; inquiring, at the same time, to what he might attribute the honour of his visit. "Oh, Mr. L——," replied the unknown, with the greatest ease imaginable, "I am well aware that I have not the honour of being personally known to you, but you have no doubt heard often of my name, which is Gammon. I am come up into your district to take charge of a vacant station for Mr. Thingame, who, you no doubt are aware, has recently purchased one." This Mr. L—— knew perfectly well, as such was the case, and he said directly, "Then I have the pleasure of seeing one of my future neighbours. Pray, Mr. Gammon,

excuse my rudeness, but what will you take to drink?"—"Thank you, Mr. L——, you are very kind; I 'll take a glass of brandy, if you please."—"Certainly, my good sir," replied his obliging host; and brandy and tumblers were instantly forthcoming. During the course of conversation which ensued over their grog, Mr. L—— asked his friend Mr. Gammon, in confidence, whether or not in his journey up the country he had seen or heard of Mr. Curran, as he was suspected of making his way up to Maneroo, and he (Mr. L——) was on a sharp look-out for him. "Oh, yes, Mr. L——; I have often heard of such a gentleman," replied Mr. Gammon, "but never had the good fortune to see him. I am told he much resembles me in appearance." — "Indeed!" said Mr. L——; "I should scarcely credit that. He must be a fine-looking man, then."—"Thank you for the compliment, Mr. L——. I am sorry my time is so precious at present that I cannot stay longer, as I do not know how soon I may be wanted."—"You are surely not going before dinner?" inquired his hospitable entertainer. "Really, Mr. Gammon, I did think you would dine with me; I have

some fine cockatoo soup."—"Really, my kind sir, I regret my inability to stay very much; but you will pardon me this time."—"Well, then, Mr. Gammon, I hope you will not make a stranger of yourself, but do me the honour of calling the next time you come this way, and take pot-luck with me in a friendly way."—"Oh, Mr. L——, depend upon it, the next time I call it will be in a friendly way; but I should never wish better luck than the present." Thus, with mutual expressions of satisfaction, (but from far different causes,) they parted, Mr. L—— seeing him to the door, and there exchanging a parting salute as he rode away. "Very gentlemanly young man, that," thought Mr. L——; "I am really glad of having made his acquaintance: so kind and off-handed, too, in calling. I wish he had stayed to dinner; but I shall soon see him again." Not so soon, Mr. L——, as you imagine, and under far different auspices; for the good Mr. Gammon had scarcely been gone two hours when four mounted policemen rode furiously up to the house, and on seeing Mr. L——, the commissioner, informed him that the noted, desperate, and determined

Curran, the bushranger, was only an hour or two in advance of them, well mounted and in disguise. "Good Heavens!" ejaculated the commissioner, his hair bristling; "what horse —what dress had he?" These they described so accurately, that it left no doubt in the mind of the commissioner that his *friend* Mr. Gammon, whom he had so recently entertained, was no other than the identical Mr. Curran. "Well, d—n his effrontery! Gammon, indeed! This is no gammon! I'll gammon him, if I catch him!"

Such were the outpourings of his surcharged and wounded feelings whilst his horse was being saddled, and the policemen laughing at him till they nearly fell from their horses. Curran, however, deceived them still further, as their pursuit was ineffectual, and they all returned spiritless and disappointed.

The same man was subsequently taken, escaped, and was retaken and ultimately hanged at Berrima during my stay, on a charge of rape; and, on the eve of execution, he spoke of Mr. L—— and the cockatoo soup. It is, however, a common practice with men illegally at large, or (in colonial phraseology) *wrong*, when they have

occasion to pass near a police-station, to walk boldly up to the door, and request a drink of water or a light for the pipe, which is instantly afforded, with "Yes, sure, my lad; walk in and rest yourself." Frequently instead of water, a drink of tea is given them, and they are suffered, in most instances, to depart without a question as to who or what they are, as such conduct would be considered a breach of hospitality; whereas, had any such characters been found in the bush or on the road, the police would have deemed it their bounden duty to ascertain who they were.

During my stay as one of the mounted border police, I had every opportunity of seeing the general features of that wild and romantic region extending from the Snowy Mountains to Twofold Bay, and thence along the sea-coast to Broulee, embracing likewise the rich intermediate space between the coast and the Maneroo plains. It is a well-watered and fertile tract, being generally composed of rich alluvial soil and red granite, densely wooded, with the exception of the level land, which contains not a single tree or bush of any kind, but affords fine pasture land for cattle,

which in that quarter are very numerous. The plains, again, are of vast extent, chiefly applied to the depasturing of sheep, of which valuable stock thousands might be seen clothing the green surface of the waste, like so many fleecy flakes of snow. Here the wild dog is not so much apprehended as in the bush, owing to the vast extent of view you can command; and they prefer approaching unobserved, if possible, with cat-like cunning.

From the various kinds of timber in New South Wales, where it so much abounds, it may naturally be inferred, and very justly too, that much valuable wood is to be obtained there, especially for building purposes. The most esteemed and the most valuable are mahogany, cedar, and pine woods, which in many parts are very abundant, and grow to an enormous size. The similitude between the two former is remarkable, as, when polished, the one equals the other in gloss and grain, but the cedar is not so deep-coloured. It is, however, generally used for cabinet purposes and in-door furniture. Of the other kinds there are many, consisting of iron-bark, stringy-bark, white, red, and

blue gum, manna, or apple-tree, myall, and box-wood, with green-wattle and tea trees, and many others whose kinds and qualities I did not recognise.

As most houses or huts in the interior are constructed solely of wood cut up, by means of wedges, into wide slabs, and fixed upright into grooved or morticed wall-plates and sleepers, the iron and stringy barks, from their yielding grain, are most generally used; and so large and lofty do they become, that I once saw a large hut constructed out of a single tree. The but of the tree was subsequently shewn to me by the occupant of the house, who also informed me that it took two men part of two days to cut it down with a cross-cut saw. The roofing of the huts consists of sheets of bark, or pieces of wood in the shape of slates, termed shingles, stripped and split from the stringy-bark tree. The bark comes off very easily, and can be stripped to almost any size, but it is generally of about six feet by four in dimensions. Sawyers in the bush have to pay two pounds per annum for a licence to cut timber, and an additional sum when cedar is included. The myall is a splendid specimen of perfumed wood, having,

when cut or scraped, a most delightful odour; but, from its stinted growth, it is not applicable to any expensive purpose, but is usually turned into short whip-handles.

With reference to the other kinds I have mentioned, their particular properties are immaterial, with the exception of the green-wattle, which, though of inferior size, is of superior utility, being solely and exclusively used for tanning purposes; the bark being stripped off, dried, and then sold for four and five pounds per ton. It is considered by tanners equally as good, if not better than our oak bark. There is likewise a peculiar kind of gum which exudes from it, very sweet in flavour, and an excellent remedy for dysentery. The native blacks also feed on it, and find it very nutritious. Its growth is not general, but in some places it is abundant.

The dwellings of the poorer or labouring class, in the interior, when not constructed of slabs, are composed of sheets of bark, placed perpendicularly, and united by means of cross-bars to the corner-posts. Others there are of a still more humble and primitive style, with merely the bark, support-

ed on transverse poles, and termed *gunyas*. These are very comfortless indeed, as the fire must be on the outside. Use, however, truly becomes second nature, and it is surprising to witness what seeming comfort and resignation pervade these humble habitations.

Independently of timber applicable to the purposes I have mentioned, a considerable portion of it is used in ship-building, most of the colonial cruisers being built in Sydney, Port Philip, and other places. Steamers, likewise, of large dimensions, are frequently turned off the stocks, plying to and from Van Diemen's Land, New Zealand, and various ports of the adjoining coast. The engines, I believe, are sent from England, but the boilers, &c. are manufactured on the spot.

Having mentioned the rational part of the tenants of those gigantic wilds, the bush, it may be well to say something of the brute creation. But before I do so, I will speak of the blacks, who are indeed but a short way removed from the brute, both in passions, pursuits, and propensities. Of course I allude to them in their *natural* state.

They are a migratory race, subsisting entirely on the natural produce of the field and flood. A singular race they are certainly, yet not without their laws and regulations; the most remarkable of which is, that the males, until they have arrived at the age of puberty, are not allowed to enter into female society, or possess a private *gin*, or wife. Having numbered so many moons, by which they calculate time, and when about the age of sixteen, they are deemed worthy of this distinguished honour and privilege. When they attain the years of manhood, a most singular ceremony takes place, called in the native language a *corrorbaree*. The whole tribe to which the new adults belong assemble, including men, women, and children, and go through a wild and intensely exciting dance, accompanied by their voices, round large fires, the women or *gins* beating time on their opossum cloaks. The scene is not only of a novel, but terrific character, as the men are all naked, and fantastically painted with variously coloured clay —one side white, another part red, and another yellow, all formed into the most singular figures and devices. The bodily exertion of the performers on such occasions is violent in

the extreme, and they work themselves into a state of frenzy. This important part of the performance being accomplished, the young men are led into a circle, and one of the front teeth of each knocked out with a stone or tomahawk, which completes the ceremony, when they are duly declared worthy and qualified to enter the connubial state. In consequence of this peculiar custom, every male adult among the aboriginal tribes is destitute of one of his front teeth.

Another peculiarity attached to this original race is the law relative to the abduction of a young *gin* from her tribe by a black man belonging to another tribe. When this occurs, the male members of the aggrieved tribe demand not only restitution of the *gin*, but the death of the delinquent. A grand *corrorbaree* of both parties ensues, where the merits of the case are sagely and deliberately discussed, which eventually terminates in the trial of the man by the following singular process. The offender is placed at a certain distance, say one hundred yards, from the *gin's* tribe, armed with a club, when her nearest relatives discharge so many spears at him, which, if he can parry or evade in any way, until the full

number is completed, he is set at liberty and allowed to retain his wife; if otherwise, he dies, and is devoured by both parties, who deem this a sumptuous repast. Difficult as it may appear, many instances occur of the culprit escaping scot free, or perhaps with a slight wound or two.

The method of taking wild fowl, which abound in this country, is as novel as it is singular, and, were it not a well-authenticated fact, might reasonably be disputed. When the natives want a few ducks, they repair to a large lake, or *lagoon*, where hundreds are to be found at certain seasons, and being naked, they bind round their matted locks, embracing head, face and all, a quantity of weed, termed duck-weed, of which the web-footed tribe is particularly fond, and diving into the water, they come to the surface very near the objects of their pursuit, but so gently, gradually, and imperceptibly, that the ducks are not even disturbed, but in a short time assemble round the weed. The blacks then pull them below the water by their legs, until they are satisfied with their success, when throwing off their mask with a terrific shout, they scare the

feathery legions, who rise in dismay at the dangerous proximity of their wily enemies. Such, I have been often credibly informed, is the method they adopt; but I have not myself witnessed it.

From constant practice from infancy, the men become a kind of amphibious animal, living longer under water than any European could possibly do. In fishing, likewise, they are very expert, and spear the fish with considerable dexterity. But this skill and dexterity is not solely directed to these innocent and necessary pursuits. By the same means they destroy an incredible number of sheep and cattle in the more remote districts. It is not altogether on account of what they consume that the loss is so much to be deplored, as that they waste far more than they use. In many instances they have been known to drive off whole flocks of sheep, murdering the unfortunate shepherd.

The natives have, however, a different method of capturing horned cattle. The natural wildness of their prey, and their seemingly instinctive dread of the blacks,

which in a great measure arises from their incessant harassing and hunting them, occasions the natives far greater difficulty in carrying on their wholesale depredations. Occasionally, when they come upon a fat beast in the bush, they discharge their spears at him, and if he does not immediately fall, they will pursue him until the poor brute drops from loss of blood. But their favourite method is to surround a herd or mob of from fifty to a hundred beasts, and so drive them near some morass, lagoon, or swamp, in which they rush in wild terror from the distracting sight and sound of their cunning pursuers, and immediately become embedded or "bogged." In this manner the beasts run on their own certain destruction, for they then fall an easy prey, their captors selecting the fattest, and killing and cutting them up,—sometimes taking only the best parts from the roaring, writhing, and reeking victim,—where they stand. The remainder of the herd, if not previously discovered by the owner, are left to perish by the slow and more lingering process of starvation, or by the native dogs; and their bones, for years

after, may be seen bleached snow-white in the sun. It is in cases like this that the settler sustains the most serious loss.

About the period of my arrival in the Colony, the aborigines were in some parts of it very dangerous and destructive to man and beast, so much so, that men could scarcely be found to undertake the office of shepherd, unless at the most exorbitant rate, and from thirty-five to forty pounds were frequently, nay, generally given. Even at that high rate, where life and property were so much exposed, few could be found to run the risk. The natives are now, however, not so destructive; in fact, their numbers are much diminished from sickness and other causes.

During my sojourn amongst them, I observed many children of a half-cast colour, or, in local parlance, *whitey-brown*, having black mothers and European fathers. These are easily distinguishable, from their complexion, and are trained by their mothers to all the exercises and pursuits of their more legitimate brethren. But it is a most remarkable circumstance that a half-cast *adult*

man or woman is *never* seen among them. It would appear that the blacks, being naturally jealous and tenacious of their primitive rights, look with an eye of animosity and distrust on those party-coloured piccaninnies, seemingly with an instinctive perception that they are usurpers and intruders, and, without evincing any ill-feeling or spirit of revenge towards the disloyal and incontinent "Ines," inveigle the poor innocent and unsuspicious children into the mazes of the bush, on some frivolous pretext, and there murder and *eat* them, so that it rarely happens that they survive beyond the age of sixteen.

I have heard it affirmed by a gentleman recently in the Colony, that, after an intercourse of this nature on the part of the females, the immediate and legitimate race in that line is for ever cut off. But, with all due deference to such an assertion, I must say, that my own personal observation has often been addressed to this subject; and that I have frequently seen those half-cast or whitey-brown children running with their little black brothers and sisters, of

a more tender age, and the same *gin* nurturing them. The *gins* generally do all in their power to prevent this, and, by means of resources only known to themselves, in many cases succeed. They, however, seem to evince a greater predilection for white men than their own race.

CHAPTER VI.

Among Australian quadrupeds, the native dog, the kangaroo, opossum, bandicoot, native bear, kangaroo rat, and the squirrel, are the chief. The dog has been already mentioned, and is the only formidable animal to be met with. The rest are to a certain extent harmless, though the "old man" kangaroo, when severely and closely pushed by the hunters, is not to be despised, for instances have been known of men's lives having been, if not sacrificed, at least placed in imminent jeopardy when that animal has been brought to bay. It does not run, but hops, its hinder legs, it will be remembered, being much longer than the fore ones. It is really astonishing to see the prodigious springs this animal sometimes makes, evincing great muscular action and power, and in some cases covering, particularly springing down hill, a distance of from fifteen to twenty yards. The

blacks spear them; the whites hunt them with a large and powerful species of greyhound termed "kangaroo dogs," and sometimes shoot them. They are, however, very wary, being exceedingly sharp-sighted and acute in their hearing.

The other animals I have mentioned are small and insignificant, and merely used by the blacks as food. The squirrel has a peculiar faculty of flying (in an inclined plane) from tree to tree, by means of large flaps extending from the hind to the fore legs, which, when expanded in the air, are sufficient to preserve it from falling. From this circumstance it is called the "flying squirrel."

The feathery tribes are abundant and multifarious. The largest, or king bird, is the emu, which is similar to the ostrich, only destitute of the tail. It never flies, but runs, making use of its small wings. Its velocity is astonishing, a very fleet and powerful horse being required to overtake it. Then follow, in a graduating scale, the native companion, the pelican, the wild turkey, the black swan, the mountain duck, the wild goose, wild ducks, teal, widgeons, cur-

lew, snipes, pigeons, cockatoos, and parrots, in every variety of size, colour, and classification.

Fish, too, are very numerous, but not *fresh* water fish, with the exception of the cod, which is not only plentiful, but grows to an enormous weight and size, having been taken in the river Murrumbidgee of the huge weight of ninety and one hundred pounds; but its general size is from five to twenty pounds. It forms an excellent dish, and is very firm.

Last, but not least, come the reptiles. These are, indeed, fierce and formidable. Certain it is, that the far-famed vermin-tamer and destroyer, St. Patrick, was never here, as snakes of all deadly kinds rule undisputed masters of the scrub and bush. Some of them grow to a fearful size, measuring in many instances from fifteen to twenty feet. The largest kinds are the carpet and diamond snake, but these are not the most venomous. The smaller kinds, embracing the black snake, brown snake, and deaf-adder, are the most dangerous and deadly, particularly the latter, from the bite of which almost instant death ensues; this is, moreover,

the smallest of all. The bite of the others, by immediate and proper remedies being applied, is for the most part curable, but to effect this the application must be instantaneous. Herbs are known to the blacks, which are possessed of the greatest virtue in curing the bite of a snake; but when they can kill the snake at the time, they cut it open, and apply the reeking parts to the wound: this is efficacious. Cutting and cauterising are the remedies most resorted to throughout the Colony. But, considering the vast extent of thick scrub and underwood, through which, under the rays of a scorching sun, or when the morning dew is on the grass, men are constantly travelling, it is a matter of astonishment that more fatal casualties from snakes do not occur. The blacks, provided they kill them themselves, but not otherwise, always eat the snakes, first cutting off their heads, wherein is contained all the venom. This they do before it has a chance of biting its own body, which might extend its deadly influence.

I have been informed that instances have occurred where the black snake has been discovered coiled up in the folds of men's blankets, when sleeping in the open bush;

and I have myself seen these snakes, from five to six feet long, propped on two or three folds of the tail, and with head erect, taking a quiet survey of the interior of a hut. Cattle are very often bitten by them, but seldom suffer much from the bite. On the margins of large lakes or lagoons, being of an amphibious nature, they are generally to be found. Centipèdes and tarantulæ are likewise very numerous, and frequently conveyed into the houses by means of rotten firewood, in which they generate. The bite of these reptiles, though very venomous, is never fatal. Guanas and lizards of a very large kind also abound in the bush, the former being reckoned a very dainty dish by Europeans, as well as by the aborigines.

An interesting account is given of the kind and friendly nature of the lizard, for the truth of which I will not vouch. It is said that when a person is asleep in the bush during the day or night, and any deadly snake in the immediate neighbourhood threatens the safety of the sleeper, the little lizard will run repeatedly over his face, until it awakens him, and so warn him of danger. Certain it is, that snakes and lizards are sworn enemies

to each other; but whether the animosity of the one is carried to such a beneficial extent, I will not pretend to say.

Ants nearly an inch in length, and musquitoes of the most *penetrating* power, are likewise very numerous, troublesome, and vicious. The ant is deemed the boldest thing of its *inches* in the colony, and has become proverbial for its daring.

There is in Australia a peculiar fly, similar in shape and size to the common "blue-bottle" of this country, but of a reddish colour, which *voids living maggots* in great quantities, occasioning an incredible destruction of meat, and precluding the possibility of keeping it fresh, in the interior, more than a day or two; even salt meat it will attack as soon as taken off the fire. I have seen *milk* with little crawling maggots in it when only a few minutes exposed in a glass. This fly makes a very loud humming noise; and, when caught, the living worms will appear in great numbers. Many persons may think this almost incredible, but it is perfectly true. The most remote mazes of the bush are not free from these insects. As the winter months are only four, viz. June, July,

August, and September, this annoyance is of almost constant continuance.

The cuckoo seems to partake of the nature of the country which it inhabits, where nearly everything is reversed, for that solitary bird, the happy harbinger of spring in Europe, sings its melancholy note in the *night* instead of the *day*-time.

The principal rivers in the present colonised parts of New Holland are the following:—Murrumbidgee, Oxborough, Hume or Murray, Snowy, Lachlan, Tumut, Goulburn, Hunter, Peel, Patterson, Breadbow, and Merooee, which are all large rivers fed by numerous tributary streams. In many instances they form a confluence with each other, after winding a devious course for some hundreds of miles through a vast and mountainous region in some places, and fine, flat, and luxuriant plains in others. Of these the Hunter may be deemed the most important in character, if not in size and extent, claiming, as it does, the distinction, by no means inconsiderable, of having been rendered commodious for the transit of persons and property to and from that rich and thriving district by that large and flourishing body, "The

Hunter's River Steam Navigation Company," who have spacious stores and wharfage in Sydney, and several large steamers continually plying to and from the metropolis. The Oxborough, likewise, is a spacious stream, watering a more fertile tract of country, and forming a healthful and truly *homely* site for a pleasant and populous little town called Windsor, distant about thirty-seven miles from the capital.

Most of the rivers above enumerated abound in fish, chiefly cod, and of very large size. They are, however, subjected to very sudden and impetuous floods, rising so rapidly as to rush with an elevation of some ten or twelve feet, which destroy and carry away every vestige of cultivation and human habitation that comes within their fearful swoop. Many human and brute lives have, on such occasions, fallen a sacrifice; but, fortunately, such inundations are few and fleeting, and subside almost as rapidly as they rise. The only way to account for such sudden and unexpected visitations is by attributing them to the fall of an avalanche of snow from the Snowy Mountains into the bed of some of the rivers, the thaw which necessarily ensues occasioning the sur-

charge; in other cases, the bursting of a waterspout, or cloud, which in warm climates is of frequent occurrence, and, during its continuance, resembles more the discharge of a cascade, has the same effect. Consequently, the features of the country being so hilly, innumerable rivulets are instantly swelled into rivers by these mountain streams, which, uniting with the larger rivers, cause the calamity.

Thunder-storms are likewise very sudden, terrific in their violence, and frequent in their occurrence in the colony. I was myself once placed in imminent danger during the prevalence of one of these storms. Riding in the bush in company with a comrade, whilst in the mounted border-police, I was overtaken by a thunder-storm, which seemed to burst immediately over our heads. The rain fell in torrents, and the gleams of forked lightning were brilliant and almost blinding. The thunder at short intervals reverberated through the ranges with a crashing, bursting sound, like the rending asunder of some mighty rocks by a violent convulsion of the earth. So suddenly did it come, that no warning, save a few big drops of rain, which fell with a spattering

sound on the leaves, denoted its approach. The sun, moreover, had been shining brightly; but soon that brightness was overcast. Urging our horses into a gallop, we pressed forward for the ruins of a shepherd's hut which lay at a short distance in the bush. To gain this, we had occasion to cross a small plain, or clear space of ground, of about one hundred yards in width; and, singular enough, in the centre of this clear ground stood a large and lofty white gum-tree, a perfect leviathan of the forest, which had seemingly been placed there by the hand of man, and had reigned with sole and undisputed sway for probably many centuries. Had the hut not been so near, we should probably have been induced to take shelter from the rain, which now descended in torrents, under its capacious branches; but fortunately, as it subsequently proved, we pushed on, one taking one side of the tree, and one the other. We had not passed beyond its limits, at a gallop, more than twenty yards, when there came a deafening and astounding peal of thunder that caused the terrified horses to spring almost from under us, and then to stand trembling and cowering

with dread. What their riders' feelings were at this precise moment it would be difficult to analyse or describe; but, for myself, I was seized with a fear—an awful and supernatural fear—of that Power whose mighty voice had thus rent the heavens, and I experienced a sensation of impending danger. We looked speechlessly at each other—the power of utterance was for a time destroyed. I perceived my comrade's lips were of a livid hue, and trembling, and his face deadly pale. Instinctively we looked behind us, and there, in huge and shapeless masses, lay, rent and blackened, the before stately tree, the growth of ages, in one short second uptorn and shivered into countless fragments. The electric fluid had struck it at its summit in a perpendicular course, bisecting its huge frame, and scattering like shreds its huge and motley branches to a distance of many yards, some, indeed, directly over our heads. A dense dust was rising from the root, and the smell of sulphur was strikingly apparent. We proceeded silently and slowly to the hut; but our shelter was now useless and unnecessary, as the violence of the storm in that one stroke had seemingly expended itself,

and, with a few distant grumblings, it departed, leaving the sun to gladden with its rays the late scene of devastation.

Prompted by curiosity, we returned to the tree, leaving our horses in the hut; and, procuring a long stick, I probed the ground where the fluid had entered at the foot of the tree, but, even with the addition of my arm up to the shoulder, I could not meet with any obstruction, so great had been its force. One half-minute sooner, and my tale would have remained untold! The divine mercy was, indeed, strongly apparent, and we offered up our fervent thanksgiving.

After I had remained in the mounted police above twelve months, during which I had taken my share in the various duties and dangers consequent on such a pursuit, but chiefly confined to one district, I was removed to head-quarters, (Hyde Park barracks,) and from thence appointed as clerk to the Parramatta new gaol, with a salary of one shilling per diem, exclusive of food and clothing. Here I remained nearly two years, the duties of my office being by no means arduous, and I was at liberty to wear any kind of clothing I

thought fit to purchase; during this time nothing of any material importance occurred, with the following exception.

There were a great number of prisoners of all denominations in the gaol, and among them three convicts for life, men of desperate character, who had been to a penal settlement and served a colonial sentence; and who on this occasion had been apprehended in company, with fire-arms in their possession, charged with being runaways and highway-robbers. They had been fully committed for trial, and were now awaiting the quarter-sessions. On a Sunday evening, in the summer month of December, about the hour of five, the usual mustering time, the gaoler, three turnkeys, and myself proceeded to lock the prisoners up for the night as customary, leaving one turnkey, a religious sort of character, on duty at the entrance gate, having a brace of loaded carabines with fixed bayonets and an old cutlass under his charge in the sentry-box. The prisoners were ranked up in the lobby of one of the wings; and, after I had called over their names, were dismissed to their respective cells. There happened at the

time to be a poor unfortunate madman in a cell awaiting his removal to the lunatic asylum, who, when the others were retiring to their cells, knocked loudly at his cell-door, demanding his strait-waistcoat to be loosened, as it was too tight; this we accordingly proceeded to do, and were occupied in its performance about three minutes. In the mean time the three highwaymen, taking advantage of our attention being diverted, though only for so short a space of time, instead of going to their cells, as they were wont, went through the lobby-gate into the yard, and, seizing their opportunity, when the turnkey was intently reading some religious book, and walking about his post at the same time, rushed in upon him, manned the arms, and then, upon pain of instant death, demanded the keys of the gate. This order the poor trembling turnkey immediately complied with, and they instantly opened the front gate communicating with the bush. Well would it have been for the turnkey had this been all; but, unfortunately for him, they, instead of going out, marched him before them down to the wing where we were unsuspectingly occupied in locking up the

others, not having yet detected their absence. Upon arriving at the lobby gate, the lock and key of which were left hanging in the staple, they deliberately locked us in; and, presenting their pieces between the bars, threatened to blow out the brains of any one attempting to approach from within. We, hearing the noise occasioned by the locking of the gate, being yet in the lower story of the building, turned simultaneously to see from whence it proceeded, and there for the first time perceived the danger which threatened us. It must be understood that the three men before mentioned, who had thus by a *coup de main* taken the prison, slept in the second tier of cells in the building, and hence our ignorance of their manœuvre. The first intimation we therefore received of this daring step was from the muzzles of the two carabines, and the violent menaces which came from the men at the same time.

The gaoler, an Irishman named A——n, a man of a timid and irresolute character, who had, by his tyrannical conduct and oppression, made himself very obnoxious to all under his charge, but more particularly to these parties, immediately perceived the dan-

ger of his position, and with an active bound, which would not have disgraced the arena at Astley's, securely ensconced himself behind a stone pillar in the lobby, but not before one of the three snapped his piece at him, which, fortunately for A——n, missed fire.

Being myself but a prisoner of the Crown like themselves, and having no control whatever over the inmates of the gaol, further than mustering them morning and evening, I did not apprehend any personal violence from them, and walked straight towards the gate, with a view of seeing if it were really locked, and for the purpose of availing myself of any favourable opportunity which might offer of either retaking them or giving the alarm. I was, however, brought to a dead stand-still when about five yards distant, by being informed, in no very gentle terms, that, if I approached one foot nearer, "they would blow off the roof of my skull." Not desirous of being deprived of so valuable a covering, I obeyed the command, and remained *in statu quo*, from whence I could observe all that ensued.

The poor unfortunate turnkey, whom they had so simply surprised and captured, was at

this time standing in a side position, with one hand grasping the bars of the gate, and fervently beseeching his captors not to hurt him, having a wife and seven children depending on him for support. Miserable being! he might as well have addressed his supplication to the cold iron in his hand, as to his merciless masters, which was not harder than their hearts, for one of them, having the cutlass, ordered the poor fellow to take his hand off the gate, and his command not being complied with directly, he aimed a furious cut at it with the sword, which struck and deeply indented one of the bars above it. "Stop a moment," said one of the others with the carabines, (seeing his comrade about to repeat the blow,) "I will soon settle him." And the next moment, almost before the words were out of his mouth, "bang!" went the report of the piece, and the poor turnkey, with a deep groan, and exclaiming "Oh, I am shot!" fell weltering in his blood. So instantaneous had been the movement, that I had not even time to spring from the danger which attended it; and the ball coming in a slanting position through the body of the murdered man, having entered at his groin

and out at his back, just grazed my leg, and, striking against the *gaoler's stone bulwark*, the pillar, recoiled in a flattened form and struck one of the other men on the reverse side on the hollow of his thigh with great violence, occasioning a severe contusion, in consequence of which, indeed, he was subsequently compelled to go to the hospital.

Having perpetrated this cold-blooded wanton deed, they immediately decamped, leaving their helpless, hopeless victim lying deluged in gore on the spot where he fell. Assistance we could not afford him, being ourselves secured by the bolts and bars, but the report of the piece, we trusted, would soon bring succour. It, however, so happened that a poor creature, called "Cranky Sall," was at this time in gaol on some petty charge, and, the females being always locked up the last, had witnessed the whole proceeding from an adjoining wing. As soon, therefore, as her own safety would permit, and when she saw the coast clear, she came out, and procuring an iron mall, which was used for driving wedges into the fire-wood, she with one blow shivered the lock to atoms, and released us from our distressing incar-

ceration. Every assistance was instantly afforded the unfortunate sufferer, and medical aid procured, whilst a body of men, among whom was myself, went in pursuit of the murderers, having a good supply of arms and ammunition, which were always kept in my office; but, incredible as it might appear, although five minutes could not have elapsed ere we were in full pursuit, aided soon after by all the police force, both mounted and dismounted, in the town and neighbourhood, no intelligence could be obtained of them, and no trace detected.

After a painful and protracted search of four hours through the immediate bush, when it was quite dark, I returned to the gaol, where I found that all had been equally unsuccessful, and the gaol inside and out crowded to excess. His excellency the Governor, Sir George Gipps, who happened to be at the time at Parramatta, was also in attendance on the wounded man, and evinced deep feeling and regret. All that medical skill could effect was promptly done, but without avail, as soon after mortification ensued, and in twenty-four hours he was a blackened corpse.

A strict investigation was instituted by the Governor as to the immediate causes of the escape, and much *onus* attached to the gaoler for not having used due precaution and security. A lively interest was manifested by all parties on behalf of the poor fatherless children and widow, and a handsome subscription, headed by Lady Gipps, contributed to their relief. What made the matter more audacious and determined on the part of the runaways, was the fact of an ironed gang stockade adjoining the gaol, at which soldiers were stationed. The soldiers must hear the report of the piece, and, it being Sunday, wonder at and run to enquire into its cause, as their quarters were separated from the gaol only by a wall. This, indeed, was the case, but it was too late to cut off the retreat of the men.

It has never been rightly ascertained what induced the villains to commit the murder, but it is conjectured, that, fearful of leaving their victim unharmed, lest he should create an untimely alarm, and so recapture them, they were induced to take that method of preventing it. Others imagine that it was the result of accident;

but I am inclined to hold with the first opinion.

Although a heavy reward was offered for their apprehension, only one of the three was subsequently taken, who proved to be the man armed with the cutlass. He was tried, convicted, and condemned; but after being kept under this dreadful sentence in the condemned cell for six weeks, Sir George Gipps, in consideration of a recommendation to mercy, through his not having been the actual murderer, was induced to commute the sentence to transportation for life to a penal settlement; and he was accordingly forwarded to Tasman's Peninsula, commonly called Port Arthur, a fate, I am informed, *worse* than *death* itself.

The account given by this man, of the measures they adopted, on leaving the gaol, to elude the vigilance of their pursuers, was, that on gaining the thick scrub and bush which surround the prison, they immediately separated,—*sauve qui peut!* being the watch-word, and each took his own steps accordingly. When taken, he was endeavouring to make his way up into the interior by driving a bullock team, but was recognised and captured.

From Parramatta gaol I was some time after transferred in the same capacity to Liverpool Hospital, where the duties were very onerous indeed, there being nearly three hundred patients in at the time, and so many and complicated returns to make out for the deputy inspector-general of hospitals. On receiving my official appointment from the principal superintendent of convicts at Sydney, with an intimation that I was to proceed thither forthwith, to supersede the one then in office, and report myself to the surgeon immediately on my arrival, I booked myself by the mail, and reached Liverpool about nine the same evening. Gaining the hospital, I enquired for the overseer, and shewing him my appointment, I instantly proceeded with him to the surgeon's residence, within gunshot distance. This worthy disciple of Esculapius, whose name was E—f—d, was at the time comfortably reclining on an ottoman, smoking a cigar, and reading, no doubt, some useful treatise on *materia medica.*

On my being ushered into the room, he honoured me with one searching and scrutinising glance, in which contempt and disdain were the predominant features. On reading my

appointment, he abruptly asked me, "How often have you been punished, sir?"—"Never," was my reply.—"Are you quite sure of that, sir?"—"Quite, sir."—"Were you ever at a penal settlement, sir? Mind, don't tell me a lie." Swallowing my outraged and offended feelings as much as possible, I answered "Yes, sir."—"And where was that, pray? Moreton Bay, or Norfolk Island?"—"Neither, sir; only in this country, when I first came here." Starting up from his hitherto reclining posture, he passionately exclaimed, "What the devil do you mean, sir? Do you intend to humbug me?"—"I don't mean to humbug any one, sir; but it seems you mean to insult me, as I was not aware that clerks to these establishments were usually selected from twice convicted prisoners." Here his passion checked his utterance for some time, till, partially recovering himself, he threatened to send me to the lock-up to spend the night. I respectfully informed him that I was not yet so far under his control; but that, having been given to understand from Captain M'L——n that my appointment was a beneficial one, and that I should have to deal with a gentleman, it appeared we had been

both mistaken, and I should beg leave to decline the appointment, and return forthwith whence I came. The revulsion of his feelings was here as sudden as unexpected, and he calmly requested that I would remain at the hospital until the following morning, when he would speak further to me on the subject: "That d——d F——h" (meaning my predecessor) "has almost driven me mad." This I of course assented to; and the next day he met me quite affably, and I was duly installed in the mysteries of my office by Mr. F——h, who gave me many friendly admonitions as to the violence of the surgeon, with whom he said he had never a moment's peace, because *some few little returns* used to be sent back for alteration. This, in justice to Dr. E—f—d, was a pretty general thing, and occasioned his removal.

Here I remained until the period arrived for my long looked for indulgence, and I accordingly applied in due form for a ticket of leave: this, at the expiration of the usual time, I was fortunate enough to receive for the district of Yass, distant about two hundred miles from Sydney, and situate on the Port Phillip road, for which particular dis-

trict I was induced to apply from a very particular reason, which I will proceed to relate.

While remaining at Hyde Park barracks, prior to my appointment to the clerkship of Parramatta gaol, I was one day agreeably and most unexpectedly surprised by a visit from an old school-fellow, named B—t—e, a clergyman in the colony, with whose friends I was intimately acquainted, as they resided in my own parish and the adjoining county. This gentleman, hearing of my being in Sydney, was kind enough to call on me, and tendered every assistance that was in his power to afford me, either pecuniary or otherwise. It may easily be imagined what pleasure this meeting afforded me, situated under such circumstances, so many thousand miles from my native land, and what pleasing, though painful reminiscences it gave rise to. I thankfully accepted his proffered kindness, and he waited upon the principal superintendent, and apprised him of such circumstances as he thought might tend to further my interests; at the same time requesting that my indulgence, when granted, should be allowed for his district, Yass, his clerical

duties being centered in that township. This was accordingly done, and when gazetted for my ticket, I immediately proceeded there; and more brotherly kindness and attention I could not possibly have received than at the hands of the Rev. Mr. B—t—e. He had but recently entered into the matrimonial state, and was certainly most fortunate in his selection of a partner, having married into an honourable and respectable family, and the young lady being possessed of great personal attractions. Through his instrumentality in a great measure, and that of his friends, I was, soon after my arrival, (having walked the distance, near two hundred miles,) enrolled in the Yass police force, where I remained some months, the duties being merely nominal, and chiefly confined to the township and the immediate neighbourhood.

Another material circumstance tended much to relieve the monotony and irksomeness necessarily attendant on such a life, which was the fact of the chief constable, Mr. M—l—n, my superior and only officer, being a perfect gentleman in every respect, and one far superior to the situation he held. He was a married man, and if *true* comfort is to

be found in that (not always) blessed state, I am of opinion it reigned in his family, as a more engaging, agreeable, and cheerful circle was not to be found throughout the district, and probably not in the colony. Considering the unthankful office he held, no man was more generally respected. I mention this as a tribute due to the memory of scenes and circumstances for ever endeared to me by the happiness and tranquillity they for so long a period conferred on me, having lived as an inmate of their family nearly the whole term of my residence in Yass.

CHAPTER VII.

During my stay in the police at Yass, nothing of any moment occurred worthy of a place in these memoirs, with the exception of the two following duties in which I was especially engaged. A ticket-of-leave holder in the employ of a gentleman residing on the banks of the Murrumbidgee river, and distant from Yass about fifteen miles, having been charged with cattle-stealing, a warrant was issued for his apprehension, and given to me to put in execution. I accordingly proceeded thither on foot early one morning, and arriving at his master's house, I saw that gentleman, who had formerly been police magistrate of the district for many years, but had been included in the general dismissal, which occurred soon after the local legislature had been established. It being lambing season, and the man in question a shepherd, I did not like to take

him from the flock without acquainting his master, and accordingly intimated to him my particular business. That personage was extremely thankful for my consideration and politeness, but was very sorry to inform me that my object would be entirely frustrated, in consequence of the man I wanted being on the opposite side of the river, which was rendered quite impassable by its being unusually flooded. Such I found on examination to be the case; but knowing the extreme urgency of the business, and that much blame and ill-feeling would result to me from any failure in my purpose, without at least some great and apparent effort on my part, through the existence of a strong vindictive feeling in the magistrate issuing the warrant towards the master of the man for whom it was granted, which might possibly cost me my situation, I was determined, at all hazards, to attempt the passage by swimming. I accordingly disrobed myself, and having tied my clothes into as small a compass as possible, I fastened them to my head, foolishly tying them by my neckerchief round my neck, instead of, as customary, round my forehead. This oversight was well nigh costing me my life, for, on taking the

water, like some modern Crusoe, the stream being not only wide, but extremely rapid, and bearing along in its impetuous torrent immense trees and rocks, which at intervals reared their dark and lacerated forms high above the flood, my clothes, completely overborne by the impetuous surge, which dashed in maddened fury around me, as if enraged at the feeble opposition offered by my arms to its headlong course, were swept from my head, causing the fastening by which they were secured to become so tight, and (by the opposition of the stream) so violently to press on my windpipe, as almost entirely to prevent respiration. I certainly, at this time, gave up all as lost, and was carried fearfully along, with tongue protruded and gasping for breath, until, when all hope of succour or relief had entirely forsaken me, a friendly bend in the current of the river swept me with great force and velocity against the opposite bank, where convulsively clutching the first object which came to hand, I was enabled, spent and exhausted, to clamber up the bank, where I lay totally passive and listless for a considerable time.

Having so far recovered myself as to re-

sume my clothes, which were completely saturated, I directed my way to the sheep station, where I had been informed the man was, for whose capture I had foolishly risked so much. The nest was there certainly, but the bird had flown, as his master, watching my departure, and seeing me take the water, had forestalled me, by crossing to the opposite side in a punt which he kept for the purpose, and, long before my arrival at the station, had sent the man off among the ranges, where he might defy pursuit and capture.

The gentleman was, however, much struck and surprised with the dangerous step I had adopted, saying, that, long as he had been police magistrate, he never knew a policeman do so for him; and he likewise wrote a report of the case to the bench of magistrates, commending yet condemning my conduct. He then kindly allowed me to recross in his punt, as he observed I had fully earned that much. I could not but admit that he had completely out-generaled me, but the punt alone was to be thanked for it.

The other instance that I alluded to, was the capture of a man charged with a ferocious and cold-blooded murder, which occur

red some eight or ten miles from Yass, at the station of a settler named S——t. The murder was accompanied with acts of the most cowardly and brutal nature, and justly excited the indignation of all who heard of it. It appeared that two men, both ticket-of-leave-holders, shipmates and countrymen, being from the county of Tipperary, Ireland, were drinking and carousing on a Sunday evening, directly after Christmas-day, when, from hot words that ensued about some female in company, they eventually came to blows, and one of them, on pretence of going to the yard to fight the matter out fairly, secreted a tomahawk, or small hatchet, used for cutting saplings, and, when his adversary's back was to him, buried the deadly weapon in his skull. He repeated the blow while his victim was on the ground weltering in his blood; and shouting out with the fury of a maniac, or an inebriated and excited Irishman, "Hurrah for Tipperary!" he dealt him a last and final stroke.

Some men standing by attempted to seize the murderer, but, throwing the tomahawk at the foremost, he made a safe retreat. The poor mutilated wretch lingered in speechless

agony till the following Thursday, when death put an end to his sufferings. Incredible as it may appear, there was no medical aid called in, or any report made of the circumstance to the magistrates, until after the poor fellow's death. In the meantime the murderer had every opportunity to secrete himself.

On a report being made, Mr. H——e, a most worthy and humane magistrate, who resided in the neighbourhood, immediately repaired to the spot, and with praiseworthy alacrity immediately summoned a jury. From the evidence adduced, a verdict of wilful murder was returned, and the coroner instantly issued his warrant for the apprehension of the murderer, who had now had four days' clear start. When the warrant was given into my hands, with directions to act upon it instantly, without any delay, it was nine o'clock P.M., and quite dark; in addition to which, no one knew in what direction the villain had gone.

My first step was to refer to the ticket-of-leave register-book, and ascertain at what place he had last served. I then hired a good horse, and about ten o'clock the same

night started in pursuit, going first to his old residence on the Gundaroo river, about twelve miles from Yass. Here I knocked up the inmates, and searching the premises, found to my great disappointment that he was not there. On questioning the occupant, and telling him the nature of the charge against the man I was in pursuit of, his former servant, and likewise that his harbouring and concealing the murderer would make him an accessory after the fact, I ascertained that I was on the right track, as he had been there two days before; but where he had gone to, he (the occupant) could not tell. However, I did not despair, and resting myself and horse until daybreak, the night being far advanced, proceeded in the morning to an adjoining station, held by a person with whom I had formerly been acquainted in Maneroo. Here, to my great joy, I received positive information, that the party I wanted was then at an out-station of his old master, (the man I had just called on,) situated on the Fish-river, distant nearly thirty miles, having been hired soon after the murder to put up some fencing. My informant kindly

pointing out to me a nearer cut through the bush, I pushed on at my horse's topmost speed for the hut in question, fearful lest any intelligence should be forwarded to the villain from his abettor who had so recently deceived me.

About an hour before sunset, and after a most scorching ride through a part of the country almost totally unknown to me, I arrived in sight of the station which contained the object of my search. Alighting from my horse, which was blowing and panting from his prolonged exertion, and securing him to a tree, I approached the house, a dismal, dilapidated, and sequestered dwelling, situated in a deep gully, near the margin of the before-named river, and far remote from any other habitation. Prior to the arrival of its present blood-stained tenant, it had been unoccupied for a considerable period, and from its present associations it had a most gloomy aspect. On nearing the door I espied a man's head slightly protruding, and almost instantly withdrawn. Utterly ignorant of the number of associates equally as desperate as himself the fellow might have, I prepared my pistols, a brace of which well loaded, with percussion-

locks, I always carried with me. Concealing them, however, in the folds of my coat, but ready to act at a moment's notice, I reached the doorway, and there saw standing in the centre of the hut, as pale as Parian marble, a short, athletic man, with a countenance in which were depictured, as plainly and legibly as words could convey, his name and nature. "Murderer" was indeed stamped on his brow, and the death-like pallor of his lips betokened the conflicting passions within him.

Simply addressing him with a careless "Good evening," I requested a drink of water and a light for my pipe. This was readily consented to, and I walked in. There was no one in the hut but himself; but being entirely ignorant of the person of the man I was in search of, never having seen him, I was for a time uncertain as to his identity with the man before me. Acting, however, entirely on presumption, when he handed me the water, which he did with a most sinister and scrutinising expression, I said, "What! Hourigan? is it possible that you are here? How long is it since you left Kenilworth?" (the name of the place where the murder had been committed). "Oh," he replied, with great

astonishment, "some time. Where did you know me there?"—"Know you?" I answered, now fully assured of my man, "why, in Yass, to be sure, where you came to muster your ticket. Was not Michael Macarthy a shipmate of yours?"—"Yes, he was."—"Do you know Mick is dead, Hourigan?"—"Dead!—no; good God! is it possible," he uttered, with great vehemence and agitation; "do you mean to tell me so?"—"Yes, Hourigan, I do, indeed, mean it; and, in the Queen's name, and by virtue of a warrant, I now apprehend you for the murder;" at the same time touching him with my hand. Had a thunderbolt from heaven fallen at his feet, he could not have stood more aghast than at this annunciation.

Recovering himself, with a desperate effort to be calm, and with a frightful semblance of a smile, he exclaimed "Gammon! you surely don't mean that?"—"So much gammon," I replied, (pulling out a pistol and cocking it,) "that if you attempt to move hand or foot in any effort at escape, I will blow your brains out." Finding now that every chance had vanished, and that he was completely entrapped, with the outraged laws of God and

man to answer for, he became moody, sullen, and reserved. After cautioning him against saying anything to criminate himself, and allowing him to pack up such apparel as he thought fit to take, I handcuffed and searched him, and marched him off to the place where I had left my horse. I then mounted, and with him ahead of me, proceeded on our way, having about thirty miles, in a straight direction, to go. The sun had now sunk in a field of flame, and the shades of evening were closing rapidly around us. Moon there would be, but late; and the dense forest, which environed us on all sides, tended to hasten the night. My horse, too, was becoming leg-weary, and the howls of the native dogs, which swarmed in that part, conveyed a kind of mournful and ominous sensation to the mind, which all my efforts could not shake off. With a wild bush around, a murderer ahead, a tired beast beneath me, and darkness on all, my situation was one far from pleasant or enviable. The odds were, however, all in my favour; and, dismounting my horse, and throwing his bridle over my left arm, I jogged silently along until we had compassed half the distance, it being then

about midnight. Here there was a small station, kept by a sawyer, who had retired to rest, but the barking of his dogs alarming him, he got up, and opening the door invited us in.

The sawyer I knew well, and he was a trustworthy man; I therefore accepted his offer, and my prisoner complaining of weariness, and my horse of hunger, I inquired if he could accommodate us with a lodging for the night, and a paddock for my horse. In both cases he obliged us, made us some tea, and supplied us with plenty of beef and bread. Taking him aside, I acquainted him with the nature of the charge against my prisoner, and required him, should circumstances demand it, to render any assistance that might be necessary. Having partaken of a hearty supper, a shakedown having been made on the floor, I secured all the doors, and, handcuffing the prisoner to myself, gave the key of the handcuffs to the sawyer, to deliver over to me in the morning. We then lay down in our clothes, only pulling off our boots, and so slept till morning dawned. At least I did; but whether or not the balmy god spread his refreshing mantle over my guilty partner, I know not.

The next day we arrived in Yass, where I safely delivered him to the custody of the lock-up keeper, and felt not a little relieved both in mind and body when I had done so. My quick and successful return surprised a great many; but, although the man was subsequently tried, convicted, and condemned, I never reaped the slightest benefit for my alacrity and vigilance. I am, however, happy to say that his life was spared, and he was sent to repent and reform in the wilds of Tasmania.

At the expiration of about eight months I left the police, and obtained, through the medium of my kind friend, a situation as clerk and store-keeper to a gentleman in the vicinity, who was the proprietor of a large steam-mill. In consequence, however, of the great confinement I was necessarily exposed to, I found my health suffer considerably, and in a very short time I was compelled to relinquish my post. Being now thrown entirely on my own resources, I turned my attention entirely to a clerkship; and, by dint of drawing out memorials for "tickets of leave," and conditional pardons, writing letters and keeping accounts for persons in

business in the township, I managed to eke out a very comfortable subsistence, boarding and lodging with my old and much-valued friend, Mr. M—l—n.

During my sojourn in Yass, a certain truly philanthropic lady, named C—h—m, who, by her indefatigable exertions in the cause of the friendless emigrants abiding in Sydney, rendered herself conspicuous, arrived in the township with some twenty or thirty couples, male and female, but chiefly married people, with a view of carrying out certain friendly measures for their benefit. The metropolis was at that time completely overrun with such unfortunate creatures, who, from want of the means of transporting themselves further inland, more especially those who had incumbrances, were absolutely in a state of starvation. To remedy this great and crying evil, this kind lady undertook, at her own responsibility, to conduct them in small parties to different parts of the interior, where, from the greater demand for labour, they were more certain of obtaining employment.

Such parties as wished to engage any par-

ticular servant or servants from remote stations, had only to apply to this lady, and she would immediately select them, and send them up, at the employer's expense, of course, by means of such conveyances as might conveniently offer. Those who were not so pre-engaged she herself conveyed, as I have before stated, in carts, drays, &c., being supported on the way by such charitable and voluntary donations as might be afforded, — some persons contributing flour, others beef or mutton, others, again, tea and sugar. When arrived at their destination,— any particular township, — Mrs C—h—m would visit or send to such parties in the neighbourhood as were most likely to require servants, and by that means generally contrived to provide employment for all her charge. Too much praise cannot be given to this energetic and generous lady for her unwearied exertions in the cause of humanity; and it is inconceivable the amount of benefit she conferred, not only on the objects of her bounty alone, but on numerous settlers in the remote districts, whose pursuits would not admit of a personal attendance in Sydney.

I am glad to remark, that a becoming and

well-merited testimony of respect for her labours was subsequently presented to her prior to her departure for England, for the express purpose of furthering the cause of emigration.

Bent on such a charitable errand as that before quoted, this good lady came to Yass, and with her a number of poor emaciated-looking beings, in whom, through poverty, life was almost extinct. There were Scotch, English, and Irish, but principally the latter; and, from the delay which ensued previously to their obtaining situations, I had many opportunities of seeing and conversing with them. From them I learnt the distorted and exaggerated accounts given in their own countries of the flattering prospects afforded to all classes and denominations who migrated to Australia, and the almost certain wealth which awaited them. Under the influence of such cruel and false representations, they had been induced to sacrifice all the ties of home, kindred, and connexions, and bid a final adieu to their native land,—for final indeed it must be,—for, without funds or friends, how are they to return? Poor deluded creatures! little did they conceive the

miseries which awaited them. To my interrogatory whether they found such flattering inducements realised, the universal answer was, "Would to God that I were once more back in my own country! It would be a fine day that caught me crossing the seas again to New South Wales."

Much as emigration is to be commended and supported for the furtherance of colonisation, it nevertheless behoves its advocates and agents clearly to point out the difficulties as well as the advantages derivable from such a measure. Such a proceeding would be the means of preventing much misery and disappointment. Once out there, they must remain, for repentance will avail them nought. There being no poor-houses or workhouses, they must labour, and that, too, at the current price; and the more claimants for labour, the cheaper are labourers to be obtained. This the strenuous advocates for unlimited emigration know full well, and their cry is "Emigrate! emigrate!" But first let them provide for such as have already done so, and then ask for more. There would then be no need of so many philanthropists, and Sydney streets and

its environs would not be glutted with self-expatriated exiles.

Were we to inquire who are the chief supporters of the emigration system, we should find them in the persons of wealthy and extensive capitalists, great stockholders and agriculturists, who, now that convict labour is abolished, find it their interest to inundate the land with free labour, and by so doing reduce the expenditure of their vast establishments to an almost equal balance with the original Government support. Was it not for such a purpose that the Van Diemen's Land scheme relating to emancipists was carried into operation, when it was discovered that Coolie importation could not be recognised or allowed? And how did this supply operate? In nine cases out of ten it was a perfect failure; for, after the trouble and expense necessarily attendant on the passage out, the applicants, who had to advance a certain sum for their passage and support, no sooner received a fair compensation than they played their employers false by engaging themselves to others on their arrival, or otherwise in a very short space of time absconded from their service

on the inducement of higher wages than their stipulated agreement warranted; thus depriving their masters not only of their services, but exposing them at the same time to a pecuniary loss.

The general rate of wages to farm-servants throughout the Colony, though considerably diminished from what it formerly was on my first arrival, may still be considered high, and, as near as I can recollect, averages as follows per annum, rations, as per scale, included:—Stockmen, from fifteen to twenty pounds; shepherds, fifteen pounds; watchmen, twelve pounds; bullock-drivers, fifteen pounds; and field labourers from twelve to fourteen pounds. The usual scale of rations allowed with the above consists weekly of beef or mutton, the former generally salt, ten pounds; flour twelve pounds, or a peck of wheat; tea a quarter of a pound, sugar a pound and a half to two pounds: all other necessaries the men must find themselves, such as tobacco, soap, clothing, &c., or any extra supplies of the above. This, when compared with the present rate of wages in the mother country, might be considered good, and, in itself, so it certainly is; but then there

are many great drawbacks, which must likewise be considered. In the first place, where the principal diet throughout the interior, with few exceptions, is bread, beef, and tea three times a day, the allowance is insufficient, especially that of tea and bread. The number of claimants almost daily upon the hospitality of the settlers, no matter how remote or secluded their situation, is very surprising. As the general characteristic of the country is hospitality, it rarely if ever happens, particularly in distant localities, that a traveller is not entertained on the best the house affords, even in a shepherd's hut; for such entertainers know not, from the peculiar customs of the colony and the uncertain tenure of their position, how soon they may be placed in the same predicament, and require a return of such civility.

The most wealthy settlers themselves are often, when travelling in the bush, indebted to a shepherd for a night's entertainment. This tends much to reduce the shepherds' limited allowance still more; and often, long before the week has expired, they repair to the head station, distant perhaps fifteen or

twenty miles, to draw an additional supply, which is, of course, booked against their wages. Clothing, tobacco, too, and soap, they require in great abundance; and for such articles the employer thus finds a market, charging in some instances two hundred per cent. on every article he issues (never less than cent. per cent.) to indemnify him, as he says, for the expense of carriage from Sydney or elsewhere. The poor creatures cannot do without such supplies, and have them they must at any price, as there is no other store perchance within a hundred miles of them; and, if there were, they could not avail themselves of it, as their employers will make no advance to expend at another's profit.

Such is the general system, and a most pernicious one it proves to be, for it seldom happens that the poor operatives have more than a few shillings due to them at the end of the year; and, in many instances, they are considerably in arrear. Thus it is that settlers can afford to lend such good wages, for in reality the wages must be viewed in this light.

In-door servants, married and single, sometimes do very well, particularly married ones.

without incumbrances; the husband being often retained as cook and butler, and the wife as housemaid and laundress, at joint wages of from twenty-five to thirty pounds, exclusive of rations. The single ones in such capacities, or as grooms, gardeners, or coachmen, may be respectively averaged at from twelve to fifteen pounds, and, in special and peculiar cases, twenty pounds. Tradesmen's and mechanics' wages rate generally very high; and they must be very inferior workmen indeed, if they do not make from thirty shillings to two pounds a week. The best trades in New South Wales, more especially in the interior, are carpenters, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, shoemakers, and tailors: these generally secure a good run, and, when once a connexion is established, success is certain. Masons, bricklayers, plasterers, cabinet-makers, turners, and whitesmiths are almost useless in the bush, and do best in Sydney, Port Philip, or some large and flourishing township, where their particular branches of trade are in greater request.

Any steady good tradesman, of whatever denomination, can do very well, if he so wills it, in Australia; and, were that extortionate

exactment I have before spoken of with reference to farm labourers suppressed and abolished, there would be far greater inducements to emigration on the part of that useful body of the community than there are at present, for, situated as many are with large families, what can they expect to make or save? they are compelled to live from hand to mouth. I would particularly recommend married people with large families to abstain from such a step,—I mean the working class; for, when landed in Sydney without means, alike strange and strangers to all, what can they do? Unless they can meet some friendly squatter or his authorised agent in Sydney, to engage their services and frank them up the country, they are left penniless, ragged, and destitute in the streets, as the emigration barracks are now abolished; and, ultimately, they crawl some little distance into the bush, and are glad to work for their bare subsistence alone. This is no exaggerated picture; and it was to prevent such scenes as these that the commiserating Samaritan, Mrs. Chisholm, came forward.

It may not be out of place to narrate a truly ludicrous incident that befel this

lady during her stay in Yass, in which I happened to be a prominent actor. There resided in the township a very simple and eccentric character named J—h—m, a druggist, quack, and horse-doctor, who generally prescribed alike for bipeds and quadrupeds. He was a widower of about forty years of age, who liked the matrimonial state well enough to wish to enter it again; but, unfortunately for him, there was no young marriageable lady in the neighbourhood who could be induced to favour his views. To one in particular he paid assiduous court, a blushing, blooming widow of thirty, of the captivating name of "Silver," who was domiciling at a tavern in the town, kept by a distant relative. Here the amorous quack was to be found at all hours, drinking and love-making, and, on the strength of imaginary success in the furtherance of his suit, running up a long score, which he contemplated cancelling when he secured the silvery bait. But, alas! for all human speculations, the young and sterling dame, when he popped the question, indignantly popped out of the room, surprised at his presumption, leaving the astonished and disappointed wooer

perfectly aghast at her refusal. He was completely nonsuited; and then came the bill of costs, the payment of which grieved him almost as much as the loss of his lady-love.

Solacing himself, however, with the homely reflection, that he had done his duty to himself, and that there were as good fish in the sea as were ever taken out of it, he looked boldly around for another helpmate, nothing daunted at his first repulse. One day, not long after the arrival of Mrs. Chisholm in Yass, I was waited upon by the said gentleman, who, with many apologies for the liberty he was about to take, informed me that he had a very particular and strictly confidential request to make, which deeply concerned his future happiness. Wondering what this prelude could lead to, I requested him to be seated, and disclose the nature of his business; assuring him that I should feel most happy in doing anything that could contribute to his comfort and peace of mind. With many deep sighs and lachrymose interjections, he acquainted me with his heavy loss in the late Mrs. J—h—m, and the solitary position in which he was thereby placed, and

wound up with a wish that I would write a letter to Mrs. C—h—m in his name, soliciting her kind services in selecting him a wife, when she returned to Sydney, from such forlorn damsels as were then in want of a situation. He intimated, at the same time, that he would depend entirely on me to state the qualifications he required, and that he would willingly pay me anything I charged for so doing.

Such a truly modest request I could not well refuse, and informing him that my demand would be half-a-crown, I undertook the task. I must admit that the request completely staggered me, and I could scarcely refrain from laughing in his face. However I wrote the letter, and, as near as I can recollect, it ran thus:—

"MADAM,—Sincerely trusting that you will pardon my presumption in thus addressing you, being as I am a perfect stranger to you, I beg leave, on the strength of that philanthropy for which you are renowned, to make a request that concerns materially my future happiness. I am a widower, aged forty, and I lost my wife about two years

ago. Being desirous of again entering the married state, and thinking that, among your numerous female claimants for situations, you might know some one willing to become a wife, I have taken the present liberty to solicit your kind services in my behalf. Wealth is no object; for, being a chemist and druggist, with a most thriving business in this town, I am fully prepared to meet the additional expenses. With regard to her particular qualifications, I beg to enumerate a few, which I deem most essential. She must be clean in person, mild in manners, neat in habit, of a sweet and engaging disposition, and, withal, a good needle-woman, as the late Mrs. J—h—m was.

"With many apologies for the boldness of my application, and with sincere and heartfelt hopes that you will pardon and oblige me, I have the honour to subscribe myself, madam, your most obedient and very humble servant, "J—h J—h—m,

"*Wednesday morning.*" "Yass.

This lucid and elaborate production I duly read to the subscriber, with which he expressed himself highly pleased. Having

sealed it, and received my fee, I delivered it to him, and he immediately went and handed it to Mrs. C—h—m personally, saying that he would call for an answer in the evening.

On reading the note the good lady was completely convulsed with merriment, it was such a novel and truly singular application, and she enjoyed the joke greatly among her friends. True to her character, however, she did not neglect the commission, for, soon after her return to Sydney, a fine-looking elderly female, with long raven ringlets, and clothes most fashionably cut, if not formed of the most costly material, was seen one morning to alight from the mail-cart in Yass, having travelled from Sydney by it for two nights and a day, who anxiously inquired for the residence of Doctor J—h—m. There being but one personage of that name in the town, who was generally well known, she was directed to his house; and, on seeing Mr. J——, with many beautiful blushes, and simpering smiles, she delivered to him her testimonials, together with a letter of introduction from their mutual kind friend, Mrs. C—h—m. All things being now established on an ami-

cable footing, and both seemingly well satisfied and resigned to their fate, the intended match having, as we are informed, been duly registered in heaven, no time was lost, and on the following morning, at nine o'clock, the extreme sentence of the Church was carried into execution, which they suffered without any apparent struggle.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was about this period that a great commotion was excited throughout the colony, especially among the larger stockholders, in consequence of the new regulations relative to the Crown Lands Act, recommended by the Governor, Sir George Gipps, to Lord Stanley, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, being carried into operation. According to the former working of the act, one license of ten pounds would cover any amount of area, without reference to the quantity of stock depastured thereon, whether it were 50 or 5000; so that a poor squatter on unalienated crown lands, with only one station, his homestead, and comparatively little stock, had as much to pay for his license as the great settler possessed of thousands. Independent of this, the large squatter was allowed a "run," and divers stations, proportionate to his stock, in some instances to the number

of ten or a dozen. The assessments were of course the same to both; yet the advantages possessed by the wealthy over the poorer class of farmers were many and great, as the principal parts of the country were claimed by the former, who thus cooped up the latter into a very confined space, and oftentimes ran them off the land altogether. Monopoly usurped the sway, and the poor squatter had no remedy but patiently to submit to it.

Under these circumstances, Sir George Gipps, with a view to remedy the existing evil, and at the same time to place matters on a desirable equality with reference to stations, was induced to frame such laws as he thought would tend to remove that monopoly which so prejudicially existed. He accordingly transmitted to the Secretary for the Colonies, for the purpose of being laid before Parliament, such enactments and modifications touching the occupation of crown lands in Australia, as would not only benefit in a material degree the condition of the inferior squatter, but be the means of considerably augmenting the revenues of the crown. These regulations were duly gazetted and proclaimed throughout the colony,

as having been transmitted in the governor's despatches, for the consideration of the home government, and, unless rescinded, would be carried into active operation on the 1st of July then ensuing.

In these new regulations, among other things, it was enacted that every squatter should take out an additional license for every station distant more than seven miles from his head station, and that no one station should cover an area of more than five square miles. Should the stock required to be depastured exceed 2000 sheep and 500 head of cattle, or a mixed herd of sheep and cattle equal to the same, an additional license was to be taken out, and every station in a different district from the head station was to be charged separately, even should two stations belonging to the same individual be absolutely adjoining in the separate districts. A more fair, just, and equitable measure could not possibly have been conceived; and the only surprise is, that such a step did not suggest itself to the sagacious mind of Sir George Gipps long before.

During the whole course of his administration, embracing a period of eight years, he

never adopted a plan so calculated to confer benefit on the colony generally, and the crown in particular, for now there is not evinced that grasping and covetous principle among the more wealthy settlers, as at one time threatened the total extirpation of the less fortunate, who seemed to them to be nothing better than intruders on their privileges, and merely tolerated on philanthropic grounds. The great influence, too, possessed by such over the commissioners, rendered any appeal on the part of the aggrieved worse than useless; and, if troublesome, a speedy method would soon be discovered of removing them altogether. Much business can be done in an incredibly short space of time over a bottle of wine or brandy, and the opportunity in that country is not neglected. A fine brood mare, milch cow, or merino ewe is likewise not to be despised.

Now the inferior squatter has some chance of getting and preserving a run, as a multiplicity of stations are suddenly found to be very inconvenient by their aristocratic neighbours. Well might this impartial and just measure cause such a stir among extensive proprietors and stockholders. Well might

they condemn the policy of such a law, when their own immediate interests were so materially and vitally concerned. Instead of paying as formerly ten pounds, they would now, in many instances, have to disburse five and ten tens every year, which, together with their assessments, would detract materially from the value of their fleecy flocks. They one and all seemed actuated by a simultaneous and irresistible impulse throughout every part of those remote districts; and petition upon petition was poured in to the General and Grand Pastoral Association Committee in Sydney, from all quarters,—some to the Houses of Parliament, others to the local legislature, and others to his Excellency himself,—numerously, and, of course, most respectably signed, praying the abolition of such a fearful and pernicious law. But all their petitions would not suffice to counteract the judicious and sound principles laid down by Sir George; they were too powerful and apparent to be controverted, and the enactments were not only immediately confirmed by her Majesty and Parliament, but the highest encomiums were passed on their sagacious and impartial framer.

It was for this fair and just measure that the late and much to be lamented Sir George Gipps entailed on his memory such strong and vindictive animosity. It was for this act alone, an act which future ages will have to applaud, that all his untiring efforts, his unwearied zeal devoted to the welfare of the colony and its miscellaneous inhabitants, were cancelled and forgotten; but his strongest declaimers, his most bitter traducers, now that the object of their animosity and spleen is for ever removed, will yet acknowledge his merits and applaud his virtues, and that, too, when his beneficent acts are still ripe in the memory of all.

Such has ever been the case, and such inevitably will be the case with the departed Sir George Gipps. Not only his health, but his life, was sacrificed for the interests of the crown and colony. Beset by so many powerful and personal enemies in the scene of his administration, who neglected no opportunity of thwarting his views, and discountenancing his actions in every possible way, it will be evident to all, that, had he not been a man possessed of the most clear conception, sound knowledge, and mature judgment, his reign

would not have reached the length it did; as in the case of a certain governor of New Zealand, his recal would speedily have reached him. But strength of mind and integrity of purpose were his shields and supporters.

Another act of the late governor, which was condemned as unnecessary and uncalled for, reflects the highest credit on his skill and foresight. I allude to the "Siloës" formed on Cockatoo Island, for the reception of grain of all kinds, and excavated after the Egyptian style out of the solid rock. These vast productions of art and labour are perfect curiosities of the present age, and shew what art and perseverance can accomplish. The labour cost nothing, as it was furnished by the prisoners of the crown usually kept there, chiefly men who were either under sentence to a penal settlement, or such as had served their colonial sentences at Norfolk Island, termed expirees, and forwarded back to Sydney to complete their original term. Each Siloë is circular, about twenty feet deep, and ten feet wide, scooped, by dint of hard delving, out of a solid bed of rock. The number formed were about twenty-five; and when completed,

they were each lined with straw matting, sides and bottom, and filled with grain, some with Indian corn or maize, others with wheat, and others with barley, purchased by Sir George Gipps on behalf of the government, and kept as a reserve in the event of any great scarcity on the part of the poor. Should such occur, as a year or two previously had been the case, from a prolonged drought, which that country is often subjected to, it was his intention to retail these stores at a slightly remunerating price, for the benefit of the lower class, who could not afford to give an exorbitant market price for them.

Judging from the motives which suggested such a scheme, we should deem it strictly laudable and humane; but cold and heartless policy condemned it as not only being unsanctioned by the authority of the home government, but as aiming at the monopoly of the market. Unfortunately, Sir George did take it on his own responsibility, and when the chief object cost nothing, he considered that such a trifling outlay of the public revenue for the purchase of the grain would be strictly justifiable, the more especially as the prices given could at any time be realised. By such motives

was the governor actuated; but, on the representations of the agricultural bodies to the home department, the scheme was disallowed and discontinued, and the grain was ordered to be disposed of again.

To evince the great advantages of these Siloës, as granaries, over more ordinary ones, it will be only necessary to state, that, after the lapse of two years, during which period the grain had been stored in some, when opened, it was found to be perfectly sweet and sound, without any appearance of moisture, free from all weevil or worm of any kind, and proved to weigh more than when put in. The mouth of the Siloë, or neck of the bottle, as it is termed, from the resemblance it bears, projects about three feet from the face of the rock, and is about two feet in diameter. This is closely fitted with a huge stone stopper, that rests on a circular ledge within the neck, near the bottom; and over this is placed a cap of cut stone, pyramidically formed, which covers all, fitting close down to the surface of the rock, and there hermetically sealed with plaister of Paris, and rendered perfectly air-tight. Were weevil in the grain, this alone would kill them. On each little pyramid are

engraved the date of its commencement and completion, and that of its being filled with corn. The stone is fine white granite, with black letters. These pyramids form a very perfect and picturesque appearance, being erected with mathematical precision in two straight lines, slightly convex, and each cap of equal size, shape, and colour. No one would imagine, when treading on the naked face of this bed of rock, that such immense magazines were beneath him, and that he was walking over thousands of bushels of grain; but so it was.

As I am speaking of that receptacle of vice and villany, Cockatoo Island, it may not be altogether uninteresting to give a further account of it, and one or two incidents connected with it, which came under my own immediate notice.

As I have before stated, the island is reserved as a receiving *dépôt* for penal prisoners, convicts under their second and third convictions, and likewise for Norfolk Island expirees; and it may well be imagined what a striking diversity of crime and character is there to be met with. The island is situated up the Parramatta river, distant from Sydney

about five miles, and not more than a mile across in the widest part. The river divides it on either side from the main land by an almost equal channel; and the work performed there was, independent of the Siloës, chiefly directed to the formation of wharfs around the island, building barracks and stores, and cutting stone for the same.

A military guard of fifty men were constantly on the island, and were relieved weekly. Sentries were not only posted at different points of the island, but likewise accompanied the different gangs of those going to a penal settlement when on the works, together with a prisoner overseer. The other class, namely, the expirees, were merely under the control of one of themselves, subjected, however, to the same restraint and surveillance at all other times.

At the time I refer to the number of prisoners of all grades on the island amounted to from four hundred to five hundred, who were under the immediate management of a civil superintendent. This gentlemen, a worthy, vigilant, and much-respected man, named R——n, resided with his family on the island, and having been for a number of years in the

army, knew how to keep such desperate characters under proper obedience and security, without resorting to any tyrannical measures or undue severity. He was at once both feared and loved: certainly, among such reckless desperadoes, there were many instances where punishment was unavoidable, if merely for example's sake; but the labour went forward cheerfully and rapidly. For the purpose of trying defaulters, a magistrate visited the island once every week, accompanied by a medical man; the latter personage kept a medicine-chest and a dispenser on the spot.

With land and liberty so near on either side, it may readily be conceived that many an anxious eye was directed to such points. Such was certainly the case, and many were the desperate attempts made to escape from the island, but, generally speaking, without success. The most reckless, resolute, and determined attempt recorded in the annals of Cockatoo was made during my time in the colony, by two young men, sworn friends, under sentence of transportation to a penal settlement for life, and aged respectively eighteen and twenty-eight years. They were there awaiting the execution of the sentence, and

resolved rather to brave death than the horrors of Port Arthur. Accordingly, one fine afternoon, about the hour of four, when all the gangs were at their work, these two men, who were employed in stone-cutting, contrived to secrete a chisel and mallet, with which, on pretence of going to the rear under the rocks, they cut the connecting-chains of their irons, thus leaving their limbs free, but still encumbered with the basils and broken links. Having accomplished thus much without detection, they threw off their clothing, and boldly plunged into the water, within twenty yards of a sentry, across whose post, a projecting point of rock, they had to swim. The soldier almost instantly perceived them, and levelling his musket at the foremost, pulled the trigger, when the piece missed fire. A second time he tried, and with more success, the ball striking about a foot from the head of the foremost. The report of the piece was of itself sufficient to alarm the guard, and simultaneously they rushed to the spot, in the hurry and surprise of the moment, carrying their pieces and pouches in their hands. Then opened a rattling discharge, reverberating through the rocks, and brought back

with two-fold violence over the placid bosom of the stream. Volley succeeded volley, and destruction hovered over the seemingly devoted heads of the two men; but they must, indeed, have borne a charmed life, for, although, when first discovered and fired at, they were not more than twenty yards from the land, and at the arrival of the whole guard could not possibly have exceeded forty yards, every ball erred in its mark, though shots struck thick as hail on all sides of them; in some instances, dashing the water into their ears, and bounding on the water until their force was expended. Still onwards they swam, nothing daunted at the deadly sound which swept with lightning velocity momentarily past them, until, having gained sight of land on the opposite side, out of the range of the muskets, the order was given to cease firing, after having uselessly expended about five hundred rounds of ball cartridge.

Escape on the part of the brave and unfortunate wretches seemed now inevitable, when, just as they were dragging their spent and weary frames the short distance which remained to be surmounted, a water-police boat, well manned and armed, with oars double-

banked, pulled swiftly round the point called Long Nose, and being directed to the swimmers, pursued and overtook them. They were picked up, brought back, and subsequently received one hundred lashes, and were confined a month on bread and water in Woolloomooloo gaol. Poor fellows! their self-devoted bravery and desperate daring deserved a better fate. The distance they had to accomplish was one mile.

Another attempt to escape was made by three men who excavated a deep hole in the ground adjoining a sewer which emptied itself into the river. This they did by slow degrees during the hours of relaxation from their work, and when unobserved. Having hollowed out a hiding-place sufficient in extent to admit of containing the three, they one evening, prior to muster, concealed themselves in it, and awaited anxiously the success of their ingenuity. When the muster-roll was called at five o'clock, the three absentees were of course not forthcoming, and a general search ensued, but without success. A chain of sentries was then posted round the island, so close as to be enabled to communicate by word of mouth. Hours

rolled on until darkness covered the face of the earth, but still there was no sign of the runaways. The very elements seemed to conspire in aid of their escape, as the night was not only densely dark, but the rain descended in torrents, accompanied by heavy thunder and lightning.

About midnight, the sentry next the sewer distinctly heard a sudden splash in the water close to him, and instantly challenging, fired his piece at random in the direction of the sound. The ball took effect on the unseen object, and lodged in the right side of one of the three who made the first attempt. In an instant all was bustle and confusion; torches were brought, and the wounded man was discovered extended in the water, making feeble struggles to support himself. He was immediately secured, bleeding profusely. The superintendent, taking a musket from one of the military, cocked it, and presented it at the prisoner, threatening, that, if he did not instantly disclose where his comrades were concealed, he would blow his brains out. The poor fellow, weak from loss of blood, made signs to a distant part of the island, and he was accordingly led thither,

supported by two of the soldiers, and accompanied by all, thus leaving the coast clear for the escape of the other two. Arriving at the most remote part, he pointed to a crevice in the rock, saying that there he had left them.

This noble self-denial did not avail his associates, as they neglected the golden opportunity, and remained concealed. Discovering his evasion, the superintendent ordered him to be confined in the cell, and the dispenser to attend him. A diligent search was then established in the vicinity of the spot where the one was discovered; and, following his marks, they soon detected the place of concealment, and dragged the two culprits forth, who were lodged in safe custody. The two last-mentioned were subsequently tried, and underwent a corporal punishment of one hundred lashes each; but the one who was shot was not further punished, as they considered that he had suffered sufficiently from his wound. Other convicts, however, have proved more fortunate, and have succeeded in reaching the main land, where they enjoyed but a short freedom, as they were almost immediately captured.

I ought to apologise for this long digression, and revert once more to my own life. On the passing of the aforesaid aristocratically unpopular enactment relative to the Crown lands, the same spirit of opposition which manifested itself in other parts of the colony was powerfully displayed in the district of Yass; and a petition was drawn up to act in co-operation with other districts, setting forth the injurious consequences likely to result from such a measure. Many sapient persons were at the head of this, and one in particular, named the great O'B., was particularly active.

This worthy person, hearing that there was such a person as myself in the town following no particular occupation, and requiring the services of some intelligent individual to take round the petition for signatures, proposed this office to me, with many assurances of ample remuneration. I of course accepted it, and a friend of Mr. B—ke being kind enough to lend me a horse, I started on my circuit of the district. As I had been informed that the more signatures I obtained, the greater would be the

compensation, I took care to collect as many as possible; and I am sorry to say that many of the junior squatters were induced to sign this petition, not knowing rightly what it concerned, and that is was intended to benefit the most wealthy. If it had been their death-warrant, I think they would have done the same; although I never omitted reading to them such parts of the petition as I imagined it concerned them and know. By this means the number of signatures was procured, and after an absence of one month I returned to Yass, and received the greatest commendation and the smallest compensation imaginable.

I had, however, a fine opportunity of seeing the country. Its general features were rich and luxuriant, abounding in timber, and generally well watered. The blacks in this particular quarter are very inoffensive. In fact, since the introduction of Europeans to the Colony, the aboriginal tribes have become not only much degenerated, but considerably diminished. This may be accounted for by the fact of their domesticating so much with the whites, and imbibing

many of their pernicious habits and constitutional complaints. A course like this, so generally adopted, has a most destructive effect on them. I am of opinion that the race will in the course of a few years become almost extinct.

My next and last public employment in the Colony was a short time prior to my emancipation from bondage, when the general Census was taken for the year 1846. On this occasion I was engaged by a commissioner of Crown lands in the adjoining district, called Lachlan, as one of his collectors; and the pay during the time we were occupied was very liberal, being, for mounted collectors, fifteen shillings per diem, and dismounted ones, ten shillings. I was one of the mounted collectors. Unfortunately the employment only lasted sixteen days, being the term allowed by Government. It proved to be a most laborious, harassing, and vexatious duty, as the returns were of such a complicated form, that nearly the whole of the squatters and many of the collectors could not comprehend them. Dearly indeed was the money earned, as the travelling on each day averaged about forty miles, exclusive of all delays and stoppages. Time

and perseverance conquer all things, and the work was at length performed, within the prescribed time, and an order given on the treasurer for the amount.

The long-looked for period of my liberation from the trammels of slavery was now drawing nigh, and I began to look forward with feelings of the most intense and joyful interest to the happy moment which would bear me from those shores, for so many years the scene of misery and humiliation to me. When I reflected on the period which had elapsed, since, with feelings of mute despair, I landed on that remote soil, an outcast from my native land and all I esteemed most dear upon earth, I could not avoid wondering at the near approach of an event that would leave me unshackled, and at liberty once more to revisit my native land. With what a different sentiment I should again plough the world of waters which separated me from the land where all my hopes were centred! It was indeed a joyful anticipation, and my mind could scarcely reflect with any degree of calmness on the near realization of all my fondest wishes.

The auspicious day at length arrived,—a

day of heartfelt happiness to me,—on which I could claim the privileges of a free subject, and be at perfect liberty to go whither my inclination led me. I need not say that HOME, with which small word so much kindness and affection is connected, was the goal to which my thoughts were directed. Having been for some time expecting the necessary funds from my relatives, to whom I had written, to enable me to pay my passage, I took leave of my kind friends in Yass, of whom I am happy to say I numbered many, and booked myself per mail for Sydney, where I duly arrived three days after. My first impulse was to demand my certificate of freedom, which of course I immediately received; and then I felt a lightness of mind and a buoyancy of spirit to which I had been a stranger for many years. Now, indeed, I had nothing to apprehend, and in anticipation I was once more roaming over my native hills, with all the blessings of health, liberty, and happiness.

Nothing occurred to prevent my departure, for, soon after reaching Sydney, I received the necessary funds, and engaged a passage in a ship about to sail immediately for happy

England, "the land of the free." I will not attempt to describe my feelings while waiting the sailing of the vessel which was to bear me to those distant shores, of which seven years before I took, as I imagined, my final farewell. Suffice it to say, that, after a few days' stay at Sydney, during which I visited the theatre and other places of public resort, the momentous day at length arrived, and the "blue peter" at the mast-head of a fine ship in the stream gave joyful notice of departure. On a Saturday night I embarked, first washing in the tide the dust from my boots, before I entered the boat; and on the following morning, at about ten o'clock, we weighed and stood to sea.

Before taking leave of the Colony, I think it only due publicly to express my grateful thanks to Messrs. Brigstocke, Middleton, Ogle, Ritchie, Long, and Rogers, for their great kindness to me. To the last gentleman, at the time holding a Government office of high influence and authority, who displayed the greatest interest in my welfare from the time of my first landing at Sydney, I owe a debt of the deepest and most fervent gratitude. By the kindness of these gentle-

men, my situation and circumstances were considerably ameliorated.

With a fine and favourable breeze we cleared the heads, and then giving three cheers for Old England, we boldly faced the mighty deep which rolled between. Our passage proved not only unpleasant, but miserably protracted, occupying twenty-four weeks. The master of the vessel, a Scotchman, named D——n, turned out to be utterly unworthy, as far as courtesy and civility went, of the trust reposed in him, not only being careless of our comforts, but stinting us of nearly one-half of our allowances and just dues. One redeeming quality he certainly had, which, being his sole recommendation, I should be sorry to deprive him of, and that was, he was a thorough seaman, both in theory and practice.

Amongst other passengers, were some fifty French seamen, who had belonged to the French corvette "La Seine," wrecked on the coast of New Caledonia. These men, from the conduct of the captain, were in a state of open mutiny nearly the whole time, and defied the authority of the master. To so great an extent were matters

carried, that the ship was, at certain hours, almost as much in the hands of the Frenchmen as of her own crew, as the latter were assaulted and their officers threatened; added to this, during the prevalence of heavy gales, the safety of the whole was endangered in consequence of a shortness of hands, and the French refusing to work. D——n alone was to blame for all; for, had he taken proper measures to secure their assistance, and provided sufficient supplies, nothing of the kind would have occurred, but all would have gone on tranquilly.

In twelve days from leaving Sydney we were off New Zealand, distant twelve hundred miles, and ran through Cook's Straits with a fair though fresh breeze. The most conspicuous feature on this wild coast was Mount Egremont, soaring to the clouds, with its summit crowned with perpetual snows. None of the natives could be seen on the shore, as they keep more inland, where the climate is much warmer. Five weeks afterwards we doubled Cape Horn, where we experienced a terrific gale, but, fortunately, of only short duration.

From this period might be dated the com-

mencement of our misfortunes, as we were as long in reaching Rio de Janeiro, where we put in for supplies, as was allowed to take us across the Line, which might be attributed to heavy squalls and baffling winds. In doubling the Cape the land was distinctly visible, particularly Staten Island, and the coast of Patagonia, between which is the far-famed Strait of Magellan. The weather was very severe, the cold being intense from the heavy falls of snow, sleet, and hail, which were accompanied at night with hard frost.

We passed Cape Frio, the outermost point of that part of the Brazilian territory, early in the morning, and the same day were snugly at anchor in the Rio roads, enjoying a delightful respite from the buffetings of the wind and waters. Accompanied by several of my fellow-passengers, I went on shore the following day, and walked through the town. It is a pretty place, and evidently in a flourishing condition, from the immense traffic carried on with vessels from all nations. The streets, too, were one scene of bustle and animation, and black porters, with their peculiar cry, were trotting along in continuous files, with heavy burthens on their

heads. One great drawback in Rio Janeiro, as in most foreign towns, especially Portuguese, is the extreme narrowness of the streets, which, I presume, has been adopted as a screen from the powerful heat of the sun in those latitudes. The houses are, generally speaking, lofty and well-built, but very irregular in their construction, some being very low in parts and equally high in others. The windows and roofs completely overhang the streets; and small waterspouts, like so many barbers' poles, projecting downwards from every house, discharge the rain into the middle of the thoroughfare, which is made low for that purpose, forming a channel to carry it off. It must be very pleasant on a wet day, when walking, to have these pipes, as good as so many shower-baths, discharging their contents in all directions about and around you. But I conclude few persons walk there in such weather. The mule carriages, moreover, have the greatest difficulty to pass each other when they meet.

After a stay of one week we again weighed anchor, and faced the promised land; but we seemed doomed to be disappointed, and to have our hopes thwarted, for, after in vain

striving to catch the north-east trade-wind, we were once more compelled to steer for another port for further supplies, and accordingly made for Pernambuco, having had several sails and spars carried away, and having sprung our fore-topmast. Here we arrived the night following Christmas day, and took in an additional stock of poultry and provisions, besides water. The night prior to our arrival one of the crew fell overboard; but the weather being fine, and our speed slow, he was picked up by means of the life-buoy, which had been cut away, the only danger being from sharks, which abound along that coast.

We were detained at Pernambuco four days, during which period the spirit of mutiny and disaffection on the part of the Frenchmen, who had done nothing towards working the ship since leaving Cape Horn, reached such a height, that the captain of the vessel, as a *dernier ressort*, offered to oppose English to French, and fight it out. Whether such conduct was strictly in accordance with common prudence and discretion, I will not pretend to say; but I can well imagine what would have been the consequences of

his rashness. Fortunately for us, the French officer had more sense than to accept such a challenge; and the same evening, under all these disagreeable circumstances, we set sail, for, we anxiously prayed, the last time, and stretched across for the Line.

Pernambuco is a nice, clean, compact-looking little town, situated on the margin of the sea, and very low. The houses are all white; but I had no opportunity of a close inspection, as I did not go on shore. There seemed to be plenty of cultivation on the coast, and cocoa-nut trees bloomed in ripe and lofty luxuriance.

Nothing of any further moment occurred during the remainder of the passage; and, with many fervent thanks to the Almighty for our safe and happy deliverance from the perils which environed us, we joyfully and gladly hailed the white cliffs of Old Albion, the Queen of the Ocean, which created in all, but more particularly in me, emotions of the most intense and rapturous enthusiasm.

None but those who have been similarly circumstanced can fully appreciate my feelings. Off Dover Castle a pilot boarded us, and soon after a steamer took us in tow, and

we were shortly anchored off Gravesend, where we got rid of our French guests, who were there transshipped for Havre de Grace.

It would be impossible for me to analyse my feelings when, on going up the Thames—free as the billows' foam—I recognised the well-known dusky form of my former habitation and prison, the hulk off Woolwich Arsenal. What was I then? and what, I rapturously exclaimed, am I now? It was, indeed, a glorious victory to me, and a soul-exciting reflection, that I had outlived the malice of my foes, and again trod, with step more elastic, heart more buoyant, and spirit more resolute, the same scenes which, a few years previous, recognised me as a deserted, downcast exile.

This joyful moment almost repaid me for all my privations; and how much the more enhanced did that joy become, when the full consciousness of the unmerited nature of my sufferings recurred to my mind! Few, very few, could ever boast of the triumph I experienced in that delightful moment. Behold now the degraded and despised outcast,—behold him who was, seven years before, marched in irons through the principal streets of the metropolis! Behold him again, and under

what different auspices, mixing in the same busy mass, which, as it were, but yesterday turned an eye of pity on his manacled and emaciated condition! He can again revisit each well-remembered spot, and refresh his memory with the scenes of former days. For an idle, empty threat he had sacrificed home, country, kindred, connexions, and his own immediate prospects, subjected himself to penal laws, and rendered himself amenable to convict discipline.

In London I found all prepared to expedite my return to the home of my childhood; and in an incredibly short space of time from my landing in England, my native hills, in all their wild luxuriant grandeur, the theatre of many of my youthful sports and recreations, gladdened my sight; and next came those still more familiar spots, where each tree and stone was endeared to me by many fond reminiscences and associations. In short, I was most affectionately received by my relations, most cordially greeted by my friends, and most warmly congratulated by all of those I esteemed and respected, and for whose good opinion I was solicitous; and they all strove, by a succession of the most

delicate and friendly attentions, to obliterate from my mind all traces of my past sufferings, which, be they merited or unmerited, I leave to the reader to determine.

THE END.

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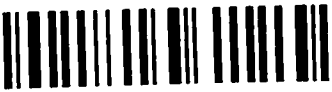
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